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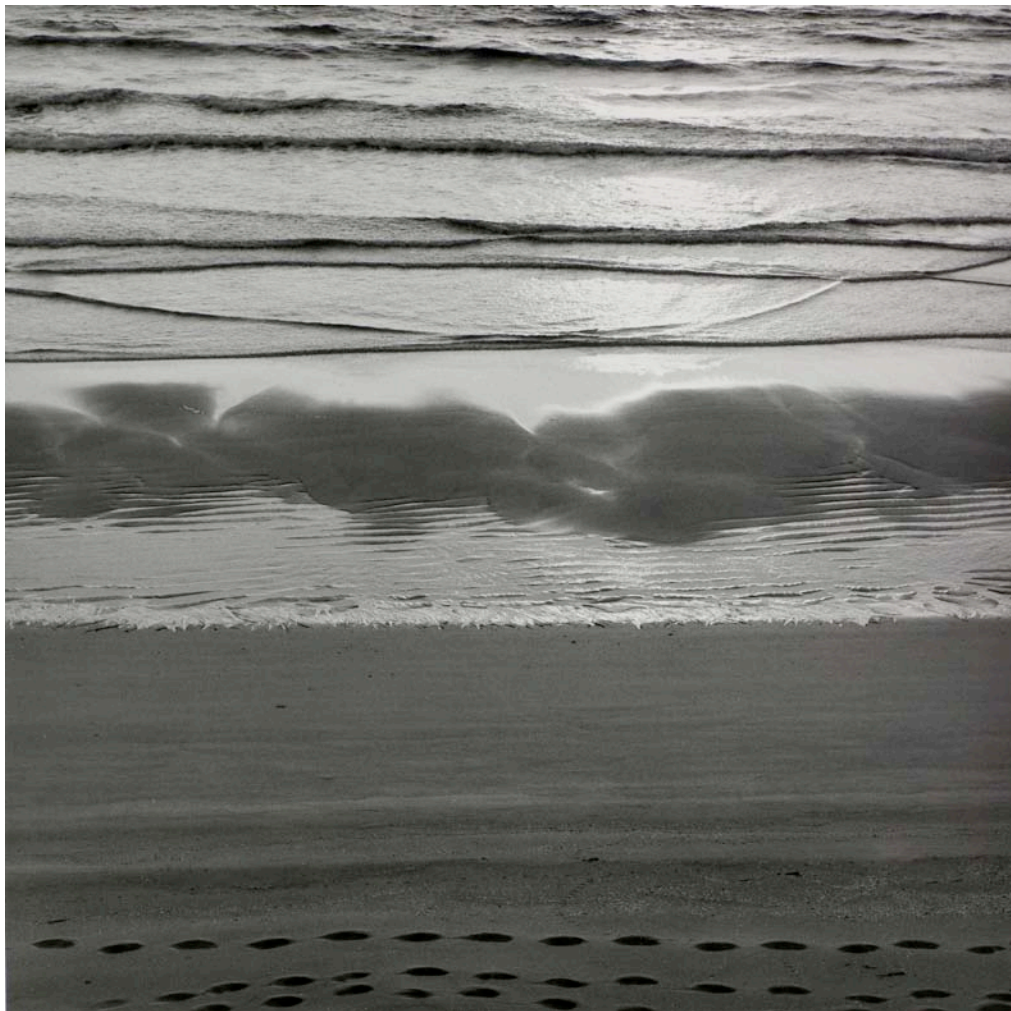
University of Sussex

Geraldine Therese Alexander: Candidate for Doctor of
Philosophy (D Phil)

**The People in the Pictures: Episodes from Fay Godwin's
Archive, 1970 – 2005**

January 2014

Volume I



Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature.....

University of Sussex

Geraldine Therese Alexander: Candidate for Doctor of
Philosophy (D Phil)

**The People in the Pictures: Episodes from
Fay Godwin's Archive, 1970 – 2005**

Summary

This thesis presents a series of frameworks analysing some of the principal phases in the career of British photographer, Fay Godwin (1931-2005). The primary objective has been to identify people and events contributing to Godwin's unusual position as a freelancer working productively in a climate that tended to instrumentalise photography. The secondary aim has been to establish the historical context within which she operated.

Godwin's progress is examined in three stages. Firstly, via the circumstances surrounding her pursuit to become a photographer-author in the 1970s. Her navigations between portraiture and landscape produced a series of collaborative publications that drew on different strands of longstanding literary and visual traditions. Additionally, wider research has revealed her interactions with some of the significant figures, and early developments in Britain's revitalised photographic community through her membership of an aspiring photographic group.

Secondly, I focussed on Godwin's interventions with environmental groups in Britain during the 1980s. Building on a nurtured respect for the natural world, she moved comfortably into the rural branches of the movement's third phase. Shaped by nineteenth century romanticism and sustained by the twentieth century spirit of socialism, modern environmental groups metamorphosed into sophisticated organisations, swift to capitalise on the far-reaching power of the media. Thus

Godwin used her both her status, as well as her conscience to help reinstate ancient rights of access to the land.

Lastly, Godwin's formal move to colour brought her to Bradford, a city in the throes of economic and cultural regeneration. Historically the North represented 'a site of pilgrimage' to literary and visual chroniclers of Britain, and Godwin's Bradford work sat within that tradition. Yet, Bradford also proved a pivotal moment in her withdrawal from traditional landscape representations, into a more creative expressive phase of her photography signifying her independent spirit to pursue her own artistic goals.

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father, D. P. Alexander, who sadly missed the last episode.

List of Abbreviations

British Library - housing the Fay Godwin Archive	BL
British Library Sound Archive	BLSA
Co-optic Newsletter	CNL
Council for the Preservation of Rural England	CPRE
Fay Godwin Archive	FGA
Godwin Family Archive	GFA
National Museum of Media	NMM
Ramblers Association	RA

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Introduction

'The People in the Pictures' is a contextual analysis of the work of British photographer, Fay Godwin (1931-2005). Her professional career was mainly built on the black and white landscapes supported by her literary portrait practice, the former being the work for which she gained critical and popular acknowledgement. Throughout her career she gained many accolades for her achievements in photography, with recognition also coming from the institutions of architecture, archaeology, environmentalism and education. As her prodigious archive at the British Library reveals, she also produced large bodies of social documentary work; urban and rural landscapes in colour; macro landscapes in monochrome and colour; as well as collages. All of which proclaimed the wider intellectual and creative forces that drove Godwin through her photography. In addition, her return to painting in later life opened another window of her artistic vision. Inspired by her abiding interest in abstract images, she began a series of collages combining old photographic prints, thus fusing the two fields of image-making. From one perspective, this represented the multiple tiers of her life, and in a reversal of that process, I will be peeling back some of those layers to follow her trajectory from literary portraiture, to landscape, to urbanscapes in colour. At the same time, I will be exploring her status as a photographer through her achievements and the challenges she faced by discussing some of the key stages, and principal people involved in the pictures she created.

Godwin's terrain – the British Isles, has been shaped by its human presence for millennia into the physical environment we inhabit today. And her images incorporated a range of man's activities within an ever-diminishing countryside, ranging from the positioning of ancient stone monuments, to the modern 'imposition' of nuclear power sites. Her representations of Britain's rural spaces during the closing decades of the twentieth century were often criticised (and are still remembered) for their absence of people. Yet, as she often retorted, *'there is virtually no landscape in Britain that has not been worked, [or] affected by human use.'*¹ At one level this reveals an element of irony in the title of my work, but from another, it is also meant figuratively, as many people were involved in Godwin's pictures. In her wide circle

¹ F. Godwin, *'Introduction', Our Forbidden Land*, Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1990, p.11

of family, friends and colleagues, there were a number who played a significant role in her career, and this thesis will be focussing on some of their interventions to show how they shaped or affected her development. A third meaning in the title alludes to spectatorial projection – the assertion that in every photograph the author imposes part of her, or his self, not just by selecting the frame and closing the shutter, but through unconscious processes informed by their personal history: thus Godwin too has a presence in her pictures.² Facets of her are traceable through her portraits, and in the many different representations of nature, such as the fair and foul swings of the weather, the fragility or endurance of the land, the isolated heights in monochrome and in the expressive declarations of colour.

The thesis is divided into three chronological phases. Firstly, Godwin's development as a photographer-author; secondly, the biographical and historical circumstances that helped form her environmental campaigning; and thirdly, the significance of Bradford in her formal turn to colour. It does not attempt to deliver a sequential account of events rather it presents a series of frameworks that focus on significant periods, some of which were neglected in her standard (often formulaic) autobiographical accounts. To date, no significant body of critical or scholarly attention has been applied to Godwin's career, therefore Roger Taylor's essay '*Topographer with Attitude*' (2001) still represents the most extensive, and sanctioned account of her professional career to date.³ Although necessarily limited by its function, Taylors' overview presents a well-informed and systematic account of her journey through the different genres and production phases of her life's work. Consequently, my work has predominantly built on a wide range of primary sources. Firstly, the contents of Godwin's archive at the British Library, which provided a selection of visual and written materials including: photographs, contact sheets and a sizeable series of paintings; surviving letters from the literary correspondence file; a comprehensive collection of interviews and critical reviews, which formed not only a history of most of her publications and exhibitions, but also their public reception at the time.

² J. Szarkowski, *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960*, MOMA, 1978 p.19

³ R. Taylor, '*Topographer with Attitude*', in F. Godwin, *Landmarks*, Dewi Lewis Publishing, 2001, pp12-8

Secondly, Godwin's family archive offered letters, school essays and other family memorabilia from her childhood; as well as visual and audio recordings of different events and programmes in which she participated throughout her career. In the third instance, I have drawn on photographic journals and exhibition catalogues of the era to supply information for the wider context within which Godwin operated. *Creative Camera* was one of the most instructive sources as it presented a broad range of information including events, articles and reviews relating to photographers, and the gradual development of support structures throughout the period under study.

Lastly, due to a dearth of scholarly research on the development of British photography from the '70s – '90s, a significant proportion of the thesis has had to depend on the data collected from interviews. Thus, a wide range of Godwin's family, friends, former colleagues and critics were sought out, and their personal recollections have greatly assisted with some of the gaps left by the lack of academic investigation. The value of these dialogues has been the unique – though often weighted, witness they have provided on some of Godwin's key decisions in relation to how she organised her work and career – given the opportunities that were available to her, and subsequently some of the consequences those choices brought about.

In the small number of texts that do set out to explain some of the dynamic processes at work, David Mellor's *No Such Thing As Society* (2007) presents a comprehensive survey of the cultural-historical circumstances that enabled a relatively small number of independent operators to advance in a largely under sourced profession. Mellor's research tracks different lines of progress in traditional documentary practices, which were also steered by American and European influences, whilst being shaped – unavoidably, by socio-cultural, economical, political and technological continuities and changes in Britain, with the institutional support of the Arts Council and British Council.⁴ The text as a whole helped create a wider context from which to follow Godwin's progress, as well as providing a platform from which to compare and contrast her activities with those of her contemporaries over a twenty-year period (1967-87). However, the timeframe and specific area of study also limited its use for

⁴ D. Mellor, *No Such Thing As Society* Hayward Publishing, 2007, p.9

the thesis. As Caroline Douglas stated, its focus was trained on the ‘*naturalistic, documentary and Realist traditions of portraiture*’ rather than ‘*romantic landscape*’ – the terrain upon which Godwin’s reputation was established, and for which no equivalent account exists.⁵

Val Williams’ influential text: *Women Photographers: The Other Observers 1900 to the Present* (1986) sets out to give greater recognition to a century of women’s photography in Britain. Her ‘*twofold*’ objective was, ‘*first, to resituate, within a women’s tradition, women whose work is widely known and secondly to rediscover the work of women photographers whose photography has fallen into obscurity.*’⁶ Williams’ final chapter concentrated largely on feminist documentarist responses to the rising interest in photography from the ‘60s onward.⁷ She noted that women’s perceptions of how they were being portrayed in the media – as relaxed, competent multi-taskers on both the home and professional fronts, contrasted sharply with reality, and described how photojournalism and the publishing world were deeply steeped in male values, making it virtually impenetrable to contemporary/feminist perspectives.⁸ Williams’ analysis of the sexual politics during the time that Godwin entered her profession was very useful for my discussion about her earliest interactions with photographic workshops in chapter one of the thesis. Somewhat ironically though, Godwin – described as a ‘*landscapist*’, was deliberately not included in Williams’ history because she ‘*could not perceive [Godwin’s] connection with a women’s tradition.*’⁹ Thus the thesis focuses on the personal and circumstantial aspects of Godwin’s trajectory as a photographer, dealing with a range of gender issues as they arise.

This study begins with ‘*Coming in from the Cold*’, the first decade of Godwin’s career, when she took the leap from being a keen hobbyist, to become a professional literary portrait photographer. Here I focus on her strategic interactions with the publishing and literary world – a milieu with which she was already very familiar. The very timely portrait sitting of the poet Ted Hughes in 1970 triggered a number of

⁵ C. Douglas, ‘*Preface*’ *No Such Thing As Society*, p.6

⁶ V. Williams, ‘*Introduction*’, *Women Photographers: The Other Observers 1900 to the Present*, Virago Press, 1986, p.7

⁷ Ibid, pp.167-84

⁸ Ibid pp. 167-9

⁹ Ibid, p.10

events that led to her development as a prolific photographer-author, and I will be investigating some of the personal and professional circumstances that both prompted and delayed their collaboration, *Remains of Elmet* (1979). In consequence, my work will argue that Hughes' suggestion: that they might work together, determined much of the way in which Godwin subsequently organised her career, and how that idea propelled her through most of the '70s.

Chapter One also initiates a discussion on the effects of romanticism in Godwin's black and white landscape work. The influence of the West Coast American school's with its emphasis on personal expression combined with European traditions of the pictorial and the sublime in painting, nurtured particular responses from the romantic style. Yet her vehement rejection of its description for her work, whilst producing images from within its province, presents the first of many contradictions brought about by her complex personality. Some of the reasons are looked for in the photographers whose work influenced her. Others are investigated through the remarkable transformation that took place in British photography throughout this decade, which included the redefinition of its mainly documentary/illustrative status and the series of opportunities and challenges those changes introduced. In the first case, with photography being a largely unregulated practice, it meant that Godwin's lack of technical qualifications did not represent a significant hindrance to her progress, as she crossed genres and adapted her wider skills to create her own niche within a fledgling photographic community. Whereas in the second case, she presented an unusual figure as a middle-aged woman joining the ranks largely populated by young men at the outset of their careers.

Godwin's main interaction with the British photographic community was predominantly through the workshop circuit, and a case study has been added to reflect its importance. However, although her participation began in earnest at Paul Hill's '*Photographers' Place*' (1978), her earlier involvement with the London-based *Co-optic* group (1973-6) showed how she benefited from the local opportunities it offered to develop her skills and confidence at the beginning of her career. It also provides evidence from a rich vein of hitherto unpublished archival material, revealing the difficult environment in which many photographers operated on limited financial means. Godwin's participation in the group's activities will be investigated

as evidence of her growing ambition to create a distinctive identity for her work in a discussion of the *Real Britain* postcards.

The second chapter: 'A *Coming of Age*' moves into the next decade when Godwin's career is still in its ascendancy. This section is concerned with her progressive turn to environmental campaigning, the pinnacle of which produced *Our Forbidden Land* (1990). Here, some of the biographical factors that predisposed her towards taking a stance on green issues are further developed in order to appreciate how and why she decided to take this radical approach with her photography. By following Christopher Rootes' model of three discernible phases in the growth of environmental movements in Britain: the modern era to WW1, the inter-war years, and the post-war years, I will be identifying some of the patterns of development that linked her dissenting views with critical individuals from previous eras. Simultaneously, the role of romanticism is traced from its reactionary development to scientific progress, through to the problematic legacy it has presented to modern environmentalists as a movement of social change. Its residual presence as a form of protest exposed an '*Achilles' heel*' that was swiftly exploited by the powerful interests of growth industries in science and technology in the post-war years, and here my investigations have been mainly guided by Meredith Veldman's analysis of its effects in *Fantasy the Bomb and the Greening of Britain* (1994).

The focus then shifts to the landscape genre's entry into the green debates of the '70s and '80s. Part of the expansion process of photography during this period saw the absorption of semiotics, and the development of theory in education and workshop activity; these occurrences had wide repercussions for the landscape genre. Therefore a tracing of its effects on Godwin and members of her peer group will be followed via a selection of publications and exhibitions.

In the final chapter: 'A *Homecoming*', the thesis concentrates on Godwin's turn to colour, and how that developed through the second half of her career (1987-2005). The first section briefly discusses the introduction of colour, as a new language for a growing number of British photographers, before introducing and discussing the reasons why she moved her practice in that direction. At the heart of this chapter is the significance of Bradford, as an inspirational draw to writers and visual artists in

search of the drama and abjection of the industrial and post-industrial landscapes. Yet in Godwin's second Yorkshire project, she set out to challenge the stereotypical image of 'the grim north', by focussing on the city's move towards regeneration. On the other hand, the city's changing demographics during a period of national economic decline ensured it would remain a focal point for many cultural observers throughout the 1980s. Therefore a selection of her images will be examined for evidence of the socio-political events that marked her time there, as well as the influence of the new British colour photographers.

For Godwin the Fellowship at the National Media Museum (1987-80) came to represent a critical juncture in her career. This study will draw attention to some of the different ways the experience impacted on her move out of the Black and White landscape genre in which she was beginning to feel trapped, and creatively frustrated. Events from the late '80s, early '90s brought many changes into Godwin's life that were to have wide-reaching effects on her work per se, therefore I will be exploring some of the consequences of Bradford, to see how this experience influenced the creation of her subsequent artistic journey. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of unpublished work by Godwin in which arguably, the artist finally emerged.

Chapter One: 'Coming in from the cold'

*'The more cliques you have access to the broader the foundations of your power to get things done.'*¹⁰

Remains of Elmet (1979)

It has long been recognised that Godwin's twelfth major project ***Land*** (1985) confirmed her position as one of Britain's top landscape photographers, bringing her popular and critical success. It featured as an exhibition and a book, with one hundred and eleven black and white images taking a general geographical direction from North to South of the British Isles, with its route revealing an increasingly inhabited and often disfigured terrain. Yet it was an earlier book that had already confirmed her status as a fine art photographer in Britain's growing photographic community. In the essay photo historian, Roger Taylor wrote to accompany Godwin's retrospective exhibition at the Barbican in 2001, he stated: '*Of Godwin's numerous books four stand apart. They are **Remains of Elmet**, 1979 (which went into a much improved edition as **Elmet**, 1994)...**Land**, 1985, **Our Forbidden Land**, 1990 and **The Edge of the Land**, 1995.*'¹¹ In this list the two editions of ***Elmet*** are the only ones that were co-authored, but in retrospect, the greater significance as Taylor proceeded to point out was the 'pivotal' role the original played in '*her development as an artist*'.¹² Similar opinions were expressed by critics when the book was first published, one suggested she had 'transcended the boundaries of her previous books produced to inform or entertain, and was now in the territory of '*literature in it's most elevated sense*'.¹³ More recently, photo historian, Ian Jeffrey stated it was the point of '*Fay's entry into art proper*...'¹⁴ The comments suggested that Godwin had moved into a new phase of her career, requiring a different response from the travelogue role she had undertaken earlier, thus it is those early circumstances that I will be focussing on in this first section of chapter one.

¹⁰ N. Mackenzie (Ed), *The Letters of Sidney and Beatrice Webb*, Volume II Partnership 1892-1912, Cambridge University Press, Digital version 2008, p.130
http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=VdSCnOAo918C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

¹¹ R. Taylor, '*Topographer with Attitude*', in F. Godwin, *Landmarks*, p15

¹² Ibid, p.15

¹³ L. Sagues, '*A feeling for landscape in poems and pictures*', *Ham and High*, 25.05.79, np, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, Fay Godwin Archive (FGA), British Library (BL)

¹⁴ I. Jeffrey, '*Fay Godwin, Photographic chronicler of our changing Natural World*,' *Guardian*, 31.05.05

Remains of Elmet: A Pennine Sequence (1979) is a collection of Godwin's images interlaced with Hughes' poetry both numbering sixty-two in total. The work was produced simultaneously, and it has been established by different Hughes scholars that Godwin took a lead role in the sequencing of images and text in both editions – a point I will return to later in this chapter.¹⁵ The pictures and poems showed both authors' physical and emotionally experienced responses to the Calder Valley region in Yorkshire, where Hughes spent his first seven years. The idea for the book came from Hughes during their first meeting in 1970, yet when it eventually translated into a serious project in 1976, it was also Godwin who suggested the reciprocal working arrangement, in response to his offer she wrote: '*perhaps I could let you have some of the [pictures] I do already have, and if then you send me some of your verses and thoughts on places as they come to you, it could work on a reciprocal basis.*'¹⁶ Thus Hughes began by sending a long letter to Godwin describing how he felt 'locked' into the Elmet region through his native inheritance of the cultural history, and its physical landscape.¹⁷

Godwin's first response to the Calder Valley was often relayed through interviews in equally dramatic accounts of the blackness, bleakness and structural fragmentation she claimed to have found there. However, she also believed that as well as sharing Hughes vision, through a natural empathy for the pathos of the architectural 'remains', part of their formula for success was underpinned by her lack of historical attachment to the region: '*I came to it with completely fresh eyes, and somehow or other I seemed to home in on things that were of interest to him.*'¹⁸ Godwin's comment is valid, but only up to a point, having spent the majority of her young life abroad, and having settled in London, she was a relative stranger to many parts of Britain, and British life.¹⁹ Yet, she had also been working intermittently in this area for seven years, and produced almost half the images for the book in 1977 after becoming more familiar with it. Therefore in addition to examining why this project

¹⁵ K. Sagar (ed.) *Poet and Critic: The Letters of Ted Hughes and Keith Sagar*, The British Library, p. 286. Also see Terry Gifford's '*Interview with Fay Godwin on the Making, with Ted Hughes, of Remains of Elmet (1979) and Elmet (1994)*', in *Thumbscrew*, No.18, Spring, 2001, pp.114-7

¹⁶ F. Godwin, letter to Ted Hughes, 27.05.76, 'Literary Correspondence' file, BL

¹⁷ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 04.07.76, 'Literary Correspondence' file, BL

¹⁸ '*Homeground: Ted & Sylvia: Love & Loss*, 4.05.2004, BBC2

¹⁹ See Appendix for further biographical detail

proved so important to Godwin, I will also be discussing the significance of its long gestation; how and why Hughes and Godwin formed their collaborative partnership.

Godwin's opening image: '*Abel Cross*' (1977) in *Remains of Elmet* is powerful, stark and measured, (fig 1).²⁰ These imposing stone monuments with their plain Latin crosses formed a schematic portal through which one might pass to the following pages, and indeed the solemn and somewhat menacing air sets the tone for the rest of the book. In her pictorial programme, Godwin's reduced subject matter of limited natural, or manmade features set within a wider, minimalist landscape, encouraged an iconising effect in her work. Arguably, this approach did not constitute a distinct departure from her previous subject matter where images such as the '*Barber Stone*', (1974) or '*Marker Stone, London to Harlech road*' (1976) were regularly given a contemplative role in amongst some of the more descriptive, or 'establishment shots' expected in a walkers' guide, (figs 2,3). Yet in *Remains of Elmet* Godwin had been liberated to express more widely her combined creative and technical skills as a photographer and printer. In the first instance, she regularly described her fieldwork as a protracted process of waiting for the right light to come through, a description that Roger Taylor has since refined by adding that it was also her personal response to the quality of light peculiar to its geographical location.²¹ In this way the role of light in *Abel Cross* must be considered as twofold, firstly it was used to emphasise the volatile climatic conditions in the upper regions of the Calder Valley expressed by white cumulus cloud-folds succumbing to a blackened rain-filled sky. Secondly, it deepened the drama, with the light fall in the foreground enhancing the incised crosses against the darkened backdrop.

In the second instance, there is a marked difference between the prints of Godwin's walkers' guides, and those produced for *Remains of Elmet*. The strong contrasts between the tonal gradations marking the progression from black to white have been deliberately exaggerated to produce a greater visual impact. Several reasons have been put forward to explain her decision to recreate her impressions of the area in this

²⁰ Description for monuments: '*Abel Cross, Crimsworth Dean (local names Cain and Abel, and Mourning and Vanity)*', *Remains of Elmet*, Faber & Faber, 1979, p.127

²¹ R. Taylor, '*The Importance of Land*', *Land Revisited*, National Museum of Media (NMM), 15.10.10 - 27.03.11. Other notable photographers who spent long hours waiting, or regularly returned to same site were Bill Brandt, Edward Chambre Hardman, and Frank Sutcliffe

way. Firstly, she claimed it represented her own response to the region each time she visited, although it must be noted that it also reflected Hughes' dark descriptions of his feelings about the physical and metaphorical condition of the area, first expressed to her in 1970. Secondly, Godwin regularly explained it as mirroring her psychological condition at the time, referring to her recent recovery from a life-threatening form of cancer, and I will discuss this point in more detail in due course. Lastly, it drew many comparisons, from colleagues and critics at the time, with Bill Brandt's characteristic '*chiaroscuro*' style. Indeed her exhibition agent, Anthony Stokes recalled its mixed reception amongst regular gallery viewers familiar with her previous work, '*I think she was taking a nod at Brandt...I got that reaction from a number of people...if they liked Brandt...although there was also a lot of negative criticism.*'²²

On the other hand, her first publisher Dieter Pevsner endorsed the style by describing it as '*one of her trademarks – almost black prints...*' implying it became more synonymous with Godwin's own creative development.²³ Yet, in almost direct opposition to the views already expressed, *Remains of Elmet* earned her a critical accolade from the V&A's curator of photography, Mark Howarth Booth, who described it as '*her mastery of the elusive grammar of greys as a printer...*'²⁴ On balance, Howarth Booth's observations certainly appear justified regarding the process of light into volume in many of the images, as they retain a visible – although darkened percentage of detail throughout. Two notable exceptions being *Bridestone's Moor* (1977) and *Hebden Bridge* (1977) where a Brandt-like effect inhabits both images, (figs 4, 5). In particular the latter evoked his preference for photographing at twilight, where the shimmer of streetlights reflect back from the horizon in an almost detached or abstract manner.

Comparisons with Brandt were justified to some degree, as Godwin openly acknowledged him as a particular influence on her photography. Her awareness of his work began in the mid-60s when she noted his publication *Shadow of Light*

²² A. Stokes, Interview with author, 10.10.12

²³ D. Pevsner, Interview with author, 20.11.08

²⁴ M. Howarth Booth, '*Fay Godwin*', *Art Monthly*, no. 27, 1979, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL, p.20

(1966), alongside her photographic meetings with Euan Duff for the same year.²⁵ Also, during an interview in 1993 she agreed the dark tones employed in their work might share similar emotional and/or aesthetic concerns.²⁶ On a lighter note, Godwin even spoke of confusing Brandt's work with an early image of her own, a revelation that almost spoke for itself, she recalled:

I went in one day to the Barbican, and there was one of the 'Barber Stone', huge on the stairs. I thought 'that's funny, they didn't ask me if they could reproduce that'. But it had been drawn on, which is what Brandt used to do sometimes...I've got one in mist...mine's very soft whereas his is very punchy. (figs 6, 2).²⁷

The 'Barber Stone' hailed from *The Ridgeway* series (1975), in which Godwin's 'Brandt-like' compositions first began to appear noticeably, due in part to its similar location and subject matter. For example, one of her *Barbury Castle* (1974) photographs had strong echoes of his image by the same title (1948), (figs 7, 8).²⁸ In both pictures the darkened, barely defined foreground placed the main emphasis on the distanced, darkened beech clumps along the middle of the frame. In Brandt's case his Surrealist influence is unmistakeable with its performative impulse transforming the trees into a file of centipedes scuttling along the horizon line. However, in Godwin's image her intentions appeared more topographical, showing a deeper skyline to emphasise the potential exposure to the elements whilst walking on the heights of the Ridgeway. In Brandt's *Avebury* (1945), again he exploited the drama of the horizon line (this time adding the foreground) to dramatise what is seen and unseen in his careful manipulation of the light, (fig 9). Thus the sheep in shadow unsettle the viewer, unlike their identifiable companions to the fore. As before, Godwin's *Moonlight at Avebury* (1974) focussed on the top two-thirds of her frame to accentuate the atmospherics, tapping into a more mystical, rather than mysterious version of the picturesque, and its accommodation of the pastoral, (fig10). It also allied her image more overtly with the English tradition, such as Samuel Palmer's

²⁵ F. Godwin, Diary entry, 1966, Godwin family archive (GFA)

²⁶ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, 'Oral History of British Photography' British Library Sound Archive (BLSA), 1993, Part 6, Tape 3, Side B

²⁷ M. Pitts, 'Traces of People', *British Archaeology*, Sep/Oct 2005, p.66, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL,

²⁸ Godwin first photographed Barbury Castle as a distant feature in the landscape in the illustrations she produced for *Rebecca the Lurcher*, by A.Simpson, Barrie & Jenkins Ltd, 1973, see pp 42 & 116

painting, *Moonlight, a Landscape with Sheep* (1831-3), in which the moon signified a divine presence in a harmonious landscape, thus giving it a timeless quality, (fig 11).

Godwin's intentions of representing locations along the Ridgeway also needed to comply with a walker's experience, for which she was clearly qualified having been a tour guide in the Alps, before joining the Ramblers in the 1950s.²⁹ Therefore her responses to those regions were more grounded in its geographic site than Brandt's, and indeed other landscape photographers' work such as John Blakemore or Thomas Joshua Cooper, who focussed on particular sites for the spiritual charge they inspired, making it a profoundly personal response. Brandt's reasons for turning to landscape seemed to suggest a similar disconnection to the physical demands of trudging through it, together with the sensorial perceptions that kind of journey produces, rather, it was more concerned with the flight of imagination it might offer as he once stated: '*although I appreciate the beauties of the countryside I have never thought of myself as a lover of nature...I found atmosphere to be the spell that charged the commonplace with beauty.*'³⁰ Commenting on Brandt's visual conception of the literary landscape, Ian Sinclair emphasised the '*theatrical*' stimulus in terms of his '*absence*' of the pedestrian – '*Classical statuary in sombrous gardens, rocks in operatic slap, lowering clouds, effigies – scarcely a human figure in the entire collection...England as a park from which poets have been permanently banished...*'³¹ Whereas Godwin's relationship with the land progressively included references to the '*TV aerials and masts*' that Brandt purposely omitted, combining them with her *physical*, as well as aesthetic and emotional responses to specific regions.³² Shirley Toulson, her co-author in *The Drivers' Roads of Wales* (1977), spoke of her aims being: '*...that it would be a great book to look at, and perhaps inspire you to walk there as well, not just a guidebook that you followed...*'³³

²⁹ C. Hacker, email to author, 01.10.07

³⁰ M. Haworth-Booth (Ed.), '*Afterword*', *Literary Britain*, V&A in Assoc with Hurtwood Press, 1984, np

³¹ I. Sinclair, *Edge of the Orison: In the traces of John Clare's 'Journey out of Essex'* Penguin, 2006, p.44

³² Ibid, p.41

³³ S. Toulson, Interview with author, 1.09.10. Although Toulson was referring to *The Drivers' Roads of Wales*, her comments amply reflect Godwin's oft stated approach to the rest of the walkers' guides.

On the whole, Paul Hill strongly disagreed with the comparison between Godwin and Brandt's work, suggesting she had been more influenced by Ray Moore at this time.³⁴ Although he was mainly referring to the latter's characteristic play with spatial ambiguity and light. However, Hill's comments also call attention to her spoken admiration of Moore's printing technique in the '70s, in particular the '*European high contrast manner*' of his early years, which he was later to describe as '*as a disastrous phase*.'³⁵ As Barry Lane noted:

*Fay got to know people like Paul Hill and Ray Moore, and probably Tom Cooper for whom printing was really important....they were the new generation landscape people, beginning to get numbers together in opposition – partly – to the documentary style. And so she certainly allied herself in one sense with those people, and picked up quite a lot of ideas.*³⁶

Hill remembered this being one of her main objectives when she attended her first workshop at the Photographers' Place (1978).³⁷ Indeed, Godwin herself spoke to Val Williams about attempting to recreate some of Moore's '*luminous*' effects in her own work stating:

*I had seen pictures of his at the Photographers' Gallery which had very burnt in dark skies, and seemed to make the ground look rather luminous...I also think there's a power thing about printing down very dark...making it black...it's like sloshing paint on...I'm now totally allergic to that way of doing things.*³⁸

During his discussion, Hill specifically referred to the example of '*Lyn Irddyn*' (1976) in *The Drovers Roads of Wales* (1977), (fig 12).³⁹ Here, Godwin's inclusion of the lake's reflected surface and shoreline emerging from beyond the brow of the hill transformed an uncomplicated view into a field of abstracted forms and textures

³⁴ P. Hill, Interview with author, 12.06.10

³⁵ I. Jeffrey, '*Ray Moore Talking*', 'This article was first published in the March/April 1981 edition of *Creative Camera magazine*, a special double issue entitled '*British Photography*' Now'. Photography @ Weeping Ash, <http://fine-photographs.co.uk/index.php/display-as-list/81-ray-moore-talking>

³⁶ B. Lane, Interview with author 11.03.10

³⁷ P. Hill, Interview with author 12.06.10

³⁸ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA, Part 6, Tape 3, Side B.

³⁹ Ibid

contained by the frame, making it comparable with Moore's characteristic fugitive relationships between disparate objects in the landscape.⁴⁰ His interest in abstraction sprang from his early training as a painter, and can be seen to great effect in his '*Pembrokeshire Coast*' series from the mid-60s, which combined the naturally occurring events such as shadow, cliff face, tide and sky to create enigmatic images of transitory scenes, ('Untitled' fig 13).⁴¹ '*Pembrokeshire 1964*' presented a more challenging asymmetrical arrangement in which the order of the natural world has been inverted, thus the sky appears 'spilt' on the ground, and the sea 'risen' to the heavens, (fig 14). Evidence of Godwin's own interpretation of this device was more evident in less typical images from her landscape work such as '*Scarista Beach*' (1981), featuring eventually in *Edge of the Land* (1995), and by which point she had moved into colour close-ups, (fig 15). However, its composition reflected some of Moore's preoccupations with abstraction as it offered an equally complex layering of naturally occurring patterns and reflections, yet in a less demanding form. Here the 'running stitch' effect of a bird's footprints underpinned a balanced horizontal theme, thereby inducing a more relaxed viewing experience. What is clear, is that Godwin's use of abstraction was generally less provocative or quirky than Moore's making her images more visually harmonious, and perhaps reflected some of her wider commercial considerations.

From a third perspective, the reduced settings in Godwin's photography showed its strong affinity with the pared-back style of Hughes' poems. That is to say, her uncluttered palette created a simplified but more striking response to the main constituents in his memories of the region, which he summarised as they embarked on the project:

What grips me about the place...is the weird collision of that terrible life of slavery---to work, cash, Methodism---which was an heroic life really, and developed heroic virtues---inside those black buildings, with that wilderness, which is really a desert, more or less uninhabitable. The collision of the pathos of the early industrial revolution---that valley was the cradle of it---with the wildness of the place. The

⁴⁰ S. Lane, Interview with author, 15.10.13

⁴¹ See the '*Ray Moore*' page on Photography@Weeping Ash website for an informative series of articles about, and images by Ray Moore, <http://www.fine-photographs.co.uk/index.php/photographers/rm>

*terribleness of it was sealed by the First World War---when the whole lot were carted off and slaughtered, as a sort of ultimate humiliation and helplessness.*⁴²

Thus as an opening image and theme for the rest of the book, the lean setting that housed the monuments of *Abel Cross* can be seen to embody aspects of the austerity and brutality of mill life for the masses, further ground down by Christian dogma, then cruelly supplanted by the annihilating effects of WW1.

The Sublime and Apocalyptic Themes in *Remains of Elmet*

The components of the '*Abel Cross*' borrowed heavily from the tradition of the sublime as defined by Burke's essay: *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757). His descriptions of the human terrors induced through exposure to the seemingly sterile stretches of unpopulated land, echo loudly in Godwin's evocation of the stupefying awe inspired by these moorland monoliths. It was a deliberate device – placing the stones high in the frame, thus greatly enhancing not just the physical size, but also their latent religious significance.⁴³ Weatherworn, ancient in appearance, and surrounded by a fierce form of nature they become invested with a divine and terrifying purpose reminiscent of the Biblical tempest following Christ's death when, '*...there was a darkness over all the earth...the sun was darkened, the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.*'⁴⁴ A sense of the apocalyptic hanging over this region inspired a similar response from the poet/novelist, Glyn Hughes' (1935-2011), who also recorded his impressions about the relentless punishment of industrial life on its labouring population in *Millstone Grit* (1975): '*What a coincidence...that the images of Hell painted by pre-industrial artists, Bosch and Brueghel...bear such a striking resemblance to the view from the hills of the industrial valleys...that in the nineteenth century made the painters' horrifying visions into palpable realities.*'⁴⁵

⁴² T. Hughes letter to Godwin, 04.07.76, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL

⁴³ The monuments measure approximately six feet each, but were initially a more imposing single piece. For more information about their original function, see: The Calderdale Council, '*Register of ancient monuments, Reference number 1009289*'

<http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ancient-monuments/monuments-full.jsp?propno=HSK499DWL2000>

⁴⁴ Luke 23.44, *Authorized King James Bible*, Oxford University Press, no date, p.757

⁴⁵ G. Hughes, *Millstone Grit*, London Victor Gollancz Ltd 1975, pp.28

In Margaret Drabble's book, *A Writer's Britain* (1979), her chapter entitled: '*The Industrial Scene*' described how Burke's theory fed the artistic imagination from the eighteenth century forward.⁴⁶ That is, with its Miltonic origins of '*Hell and Pandemonium*' it was easily translated into a dramatic reality for the chroniclers of the times, particularly through the spectacular emissions emerging from the foundries and factories of the Industrial Revolution.⁴⁷ In Drabble's examples, she showed how a range of literary reports were peppered with references to the sublime via images of the underworld including: '*the mouth of hell*' in Robert Burns' (1759-96) portrayal of the furnaces of the Carron Ironworks (Fife); of '*devils proceeding to afternoon worship*' in George Borrow's (1803-81) view of Neath and Merthyr Tydfil; and how this same location furnished Tolkein's (1892-1973) imagination in *Lord of the Rings*.⁴⁸ Similarly, she noted how the painter John Martin's (1789-1854) inspiration for his large-scale canvasses of apocalyptic scenes drew not only on his knowledge of the Old Testament, but also from his familiarity with the forges and ironworks of the Tyne Valley.⁴⁹ Yet it is Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-97), who has since been established as the first painter to represent the fascination and horror of the Industrial landscape, showing how the cold logic of scientific progress surpassed a humane response to the cruelty or damage inflicted on nature. The obvious example being *The Air Pump* (1768) in which the gathered observers – a montage of prototypes reflected a range of human emotions to the spectacle of the tortured bird, (fig 16). Here, Wright's use of '*chiaroscuro*' emphasised the bright prospects of scientific discovery together with its obverse, the heavy penalties paid by the innocent, such as the darkened area housing the empty cage. Read in this way, one might compare it with the more fantastical scenes presented by Bosch, Breughel or Martin.

Aspects of an apocalyptic vision are spread with greater and lesser concentration throughout *Remains of Elmet*, both supporting, and amply supported by Hughes' text. In '*Heptonstall*' (1977) and '*Shore*' (1977) Godwin's severed shots of architectural features created their own chilling narrative, (figs 17,18). Thus the derelict house in the former is rendered more desolate by its companion piece's ravaged remoteness making them look like the aftermath of a nuclear catastrophe. The

⁴⁶ M. Drabble, *A Writer's Britain*, Thames & Hudson, 1979, p.195-245

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.196

⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 196; 197-8; and 230-33

⁴⁹ Ibid, '*The Industrial Scene*' *A Writer's Britain*, p.233

dangled cable of a TV transmitter in the latter invokes the senses to sound and movement, as if it were swaying in the wind – a lifeless lifeline cut dead by the frame. Hughes' companion piece threaded a different tale, more native in its nature, yet with an equally moralised ending. The title: '**When Men Got To The Summit**', implied the only way forward in man's (misguided?) endeavours, was down, which was to some degree played out in the poem: '*Houses came to support them,/But the hard, foursquare scriptures fractured/...Streets bent to the task of holding it all up/...*' in the last two stanzas: '*The hills went on gently/shaking their sieve./Nevertheless, for some giddy moments/A television/Blinked from the wolf's lookout.*', confirmed how the fading impact of both the madness of Methodism, and modern technology were soon to be erased/reclaimed by the superior life-force of nature.⁵⁰ In '**Bridestone's Moor**' (1977) the apocalyptic references are more subtle, the flat, boggy landscape hemmed in by its barbwired walls, offered a local substitute for the mud and misery of the trenches, all further solemnised by the barely perceptible *Stoodley Pike Monument* framed on the horizon, (fig19).⁵¹ In Hughes' poem: '**Long Screams**' he moved from the general to the particular, firstly by positioning the reader '*At the end of the world*' with scenes of human carnage that might have sprang from a Bosch canvas, or a scene from the Somme: '*Unending bleeding./Deaths left over./The dead piled in Cairns over the dead. Everywhere dead things for monuments/of the dead.*'⁵² Yet his reference to the cairns and monuments located it back into local folklore surrounding the site of the *Stoodley Pike Monument*, which was reputedly built near an old cairn containing human relics.⁵³

The disputed role of Romanticism in Godwin's photography

In recent times, Ian Jeffrey has described how the apocalyptic theme in *Remains of Elmet* fitted into a bleak romanticism that had filtered into British photography during the 1970s.⁵⁴ It followed a post-war generational break in the tradition of representing the nation empathically, such as the photographers of *Picture Post* who mainly sought to preserve the dignity of their subjects. As the decade moved forward, mainstream

⁵⁰ T. Hughes, '**When Men Got To The Summit**', *Remains of Elmet* p.56

⁵¹ The Stoodley Pike Monument was originally constructed to commemorate the Napoleonic Wars, but as with all memorials, it honours subsequent wars, especially from its own community.

⁵² T. Hughes, '**Long Screams**', *Remains of Elmet* p.26

⁵³ '*Archaeology & History*' and '*Folklore*', *Stoodley Pike Circle, Mankinholes, West Yorkshire, The Northern Antiquarian*, <http://megalithix.wordpress.com/2008/10/28/stoodley-pike-circle/>

⁵⁴ I. Jeffrey, correspondence with the author, 02.09.11

documentary portrayed people and their environments in a progressively harsher light, having subscribed to the more detached style of Tony Ray-Jones in *'A Day Off'* (1974), with photographers such as Homer Sykes typifying the dreary light in which Britain was being cast in *'Once a Year'* (1977). Jeffrey noted that from the performers and their local environments, to the depressing atmospheric conditions in which these images were often taken: *'the make believe is tawdry and most of the figures lumpish. The events take place, often in bad weather or at night.'*⁵⁵ In the landscape sector, Minor White's resumption of Alfred Stieglitz' transcendental approach became a dominant style of the era, which as Gerry Badger noted was *'poetic and formalist, tending toward abstraction in order to thwart photography's annoying literalness,'*⁵⁶ Its main proponents included: Raymond Moore, John Blakemore, Thomas Joshua Cooper and Paul Hill all of whom taught at either Nottingham or Derby (later termed 'the Trent school') during the '70s. As May McWilliams research has shown, from the early to mid-70s *'The link with the American teachers with a different background was crucial to the development of the Derby/Trent course...[they] were influenced by the American vision of photography as an art form and a medium for self-expression.'*⁵⁷

Yet Godwin chose not to expand her experience in social documentary, and despite her spoken ambition to be associated with the landscape photographers, she did not ally herself with the Trent school style either, instead as Ian Jeffrey has observed, she *'responded'* to the *'grim tendency in the 70s...and applied it to landscape.'*⁵⁸ Her approach implied something of a hybrid response by reflecting and developing the interests of both camps, as well as rejecting aspects that did not appeal to her such as the overtly personal introspective aspect of landscape, always emphasising the presence of a documenting element in her work. As an exhibiting photographer, through commitment and careful strategy, she placed herself close to the various established support systems beginning to respond more sympathetically to the

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ G. Badger, *'From Here to Eternity: The Expeditionary Artwork of Thomas Joshua Cooper'*, *The Pleasures of Good Photography*, Aperture Foundation, 2010p.144

⁵⁷ M. McWilliams, *The Historical Antecedents of Contemporary Photography Education: A British Case Study, 1966-79*, *Photographies*, 2:2,237 — 254, Online Publication Date: 01 September 2009, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17540760903116697>

This point was also made by Helena Srakocic-Kovac in Chapter One, the 'Introduction to Co-optic'

⁵⁸ I. Jeffrey, correspondence with the author, 02.09.11

creative potential of photography. Her exhibition agent, Anthony Stokes, promoted her work nationally, as well as in his own gallery in London from 1974 until the mid-80s.⁵⁹ His unusually close links with public and private institutions '*for an art dealer at that time*' meant he was able to make useful introductions for Godwin, although he was also of the opinion that she would have made her way in anyway as '*she left no stone unturned*.'⁶⁰ Stokes introduced her work to The British Council where it featured in the touring exhibition: *Photography As Medium* (1980-6). Its original curator, Teresa Gleadowe had set out to show photography as fine art raising aesthetic considerations over purely informative content, which counted as one of a growing number of responses to a revised artistic evaluation of photography.⁶¹ Recently, Gleadowe recalled: '*At that time there was much discussion of the status of photography - either as 'art' or as 'straight' photography - and its place within institutional frameworks, and these were the debates that the exhibition set out to address*.'⁶²

Significantly, Gleadowe appeared to have had her own difficulties in placing Godwin's work in either of the two main factions referred to (above). In the catalogue she described it as:

...often discussed in the context of a new resurgence of landscape photography in Britain, but her approach is in many ways distinct from that of other photographers in this field. Where many contemporary photographers have chosen to isolate small features of the landscape, studying its universal natural constituents (water, rocks, vegetation) as 'equivalents' for states of mind, Godwin's work is essentially descriptive, recording the specific and objective – the man-made landmarks, group of buildings, the characteristic lines of a particular stretch of land.

⁵⁹ A. Stokes, Interview with author, 10.10.12

⁶⁰ Ibid. Stokes' earlier background with the Stuyvesant Foundation, and Jeremy Reas at the Arnolfini Gallery, gave him a thorough grounding on how the public sector worked, which gave him, '*more experience than most commercial galleries at that time*'. Also, his marriage to fellow curator, Teresa Gleadowe often encouraged a cross-fertilization of their ideas and artists.

⁶¹ T. Gleadowe, '*Introduction*', *Photography as Medium*, The British Council 1980-6, Catalogue to accompany the travelling exhibition, (np)

⁶² T. Gleadowe, email to Author, 23.11.09. Gleadowe referred to a well known article by Keith Arnatt's article: '*Sausages and Food*', *Creative Camera*, October, 1982, p.700-02, although an earlier article by R.D. McClelland, '*Photography: a medium of aesthetic revelation*', also showed this was an issue that had been actively discussed and disputed for most of the previous decade, see *Creative Camera*, January 1978, pp.4-5

*The power of her photography lies in her instinct for picture-making, the patience with which she waits for the exact accidents of weather and light to complete the composition and so fix an image of the place beyond mere topography.*⁶³

In a recent review of Gleadowe's summary, former Photography Officer for the Arts Council, Barry Lane offered an alternative opinion. He believed Gleadowe's comments had overlooked the emotional content of Godwin's documentary approach to the landscape, he stated:

*...of course it's descriptive...but no way near as descriptive as people like John Davies and that other tradition of people who all moved into 5/4s and 10/8s in order to be really descriptive...there's an empathy with the landscape, in the same way you've got the empathy with the people, which is more than just being a documentary photographer.*⁶⁴

On the one hand, Gleadowe's description complied very neatly with Godwin's established demands to be known as a documentary photographer working creatively, therefore, it is entirely possible that Gleadowe might have been coached for her explanation. Whilst on the other hand, Lane's comments need to be balanced with their timing. That is, having been made with the benefit of hindsight they unavoidably reflect the large body of subsequent landscape work produced by Godwin, most notably her environmental phase, and its strongly emotional content.

Ian Jeffrey's recent observations on Godwin's creative progress through the '70s and early '80s provide a more useful way of looking back at her work. He suggested rather than looking for a fundamental style, it would be better to look at a composite one, that is, to examine her work in relation to each of her co-authored projects where two sets of intentions were at work: her impressions of the regional landscape, and to some degree those of the co-author; this being most evident in *Remains of Elmet*. Of her earlier work, he noted 'a brusqueness' in her style, which had been primarily produced for the walking guides, and which changed to a more 'magnificent'

⁶³ T. Gleadowe, 'Fay Godwin', in *Photography as Medium*, (np)

⁶⁴ B. Lane and S. Isherwood, Interview with author, 11.03.10

composition following the Arts Council bursary award in 1978; I have already noted his comments on the *Elmet* work at the beginning of this section, to which he added:

*I think that she had an idea that serious photography was more generalised and grandiose than anything she had practiced in the early days... There is certainly a change in the scope of her pictures, and in her mode of address – she no longer allows her attention to be caught so readily – no longer a walker seeing things in passing.*⁶⁵

Jeffrey's views are apposite here because 1978 was also the year when Godwin first became involved in the residential photographic workshop circuit. Her first trip to Paul Hill's 'Photographers' Place' in Derbyshire had been for the American photographer, Paul Caponigro's residential course, at which he taught the Zone System, thus attracting a number of the leading lights in British landscape photography. Peter Goldfield (1945-2009) attended the same workshop, and recalled its influence on the gathering, noting how they were all '*infatuated by it...including Fay.*'⁶⁶ From his perspective, it was not just about the superior printing results of the technique, rather, it was because it added another layer of mystique to the craft, increasing the aura of the black and white photographer.⁶⁷ Goldfield's subsequent disillusion with (and later disparagement of) the chemical approach has been widely appreciated by his colleagues, yet his comments are still interesting as they comply with previous references by Hill and Barry Lane regarding Godwin's desire to be identified with the principal figures in landscape at that time, and to become part of their community. Interestingly, it has subsequently emerged that she had already been taught the Zone System by the American photographer, Robert Golden during the first half of the decade, which would seem to underpin her wider motives for attending the Caponigro workshop.⁶⁸

Although this discussion has suggested Godwin appeared less constrained by the parameters imposed on those who had been formally trained or taught, it also meant that she would still be judged by parts of the system she elected to join, and her

⁶⁵ I. Jeffrey, correspondence with author, 02.09.11

⁶⁶ P. Goldfield, Interview with author, 23.08.05

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ R. Golden, Interview with author, 09.05.11

approach clearly rankled with some commentators. For example, when her exhibition *Land* travelled to America in 1986, the *New York Times* critic, Vivien Raynor commented on Godwin's wish to control her own processes, but vetoed her control of the wider ones in which she wanted to operate. She made the following incisive comments:

*Considering that Miss Godwin never allows art, be it painting or photography, to come between her and her subject and does not take kindly to being called a romantic, a term she considers "slushy." Even so, art is present in just about all of these 111 images...' Miss Godwin is also a lucky photographer, although hers is the luck that someone once defined as "the residue of planning". The photographer disclaims romantic intentions, yet it is the territories empty and bleak enough to be adjudged romantic that bring out the best in her. As if inspired by Turner, Miss Godwin makes no distinction between the solid and the ethereal. Clouds are as much forms as the mountains they envelop and cast shadows on – so are the shafts of sunlight piercing them. And though she will now and then seek out civilization...she also proves that her heart is with the sublime and the mysterious.*⁶⁹

In spite of critical objections, Godwin resolved to go her own way. She was determined to pursue her own vision, fortified by the self-taught ethic and autonomous status, which echoed Ian Jeffrey's suggestion that, '*she came to photography from the outside and realised she could do what she liked with a very flexible/adaptable medium.*'⁷⁰

The Art of Collaboration

Godwin's literary portrait practice proved to be a healthy source of potential partners for her career as a photographic author, in which Hughes' suggestion to collaborate had played a significant role. His idea was the first of two events that inspired her series of walkers' books, the second being her use of '*The Wainwright Guides*' on family camping holidays in 1972 & 3.⁷¹ As her archive reveals, the conversation with

⁶⁹ V. Raynor, '*Photographs of the British Landscape in New Haven*', *New York Times*, 22.06.86, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL, p.28

⁷⁰ I. Jeffrey, correspondence with author, 25.04.12

⁷¹ V. Khuri and J. Staples, '*An interview with Fay Godwin*' *Journal of London Independent Photography*, April 2000, <http://www.londonphotography.org.uk/magazine/pdfs/LIPJSpring00.pdf>

Hughes was one of many Godwin pursued with different author-sittings over the years regarding possible collaborations including: Ernest Tidyman, Charles Causley, Barry Hines and James Herriot.⁷² Interestingly, her early correspondence with Ronald Blythe shows how they discussed ‘*doing a feature together*’ only one month prior to Hughes’ invitation, which strongly suggests her photographic ambitions were always intended to move beyond the status of portraitist or illustrator.⁷³ The choice to work collaboratively had been fed by her deep knowledge of publishing, predominantly through her husband Tony Godwin, one-time Editor-in-Chief at Penguin, as well as the social networking skills learnt much earlier from working with her Father, by organising social gatherings for Consular and Diplomatic events. As EF Schumacher once stated, ‘*you have only to find out how to touch the network: the network already exists*’, and Godwin’s understanding of this concept in 1970, at the launch of her professional career was not only clearly intact, but fully functioning.⁷⁴

Godwin’s earlier experience of dealing with established figures in the literary world led her to approach the literary sitters as equals, and clearly it would have strengthened as she too became a published author. However, her decision to work only with well-known writers also exacted a price. On the one hand it ensured her images would receive a wider exposure, yet on the other, it generally resulted in her being named as the second co-author, an issue to which she became rapidly more sensitive. For example with her third book *The Drovers’ Roads of Wales* (1977), Shirley Toulson recalled there being a strong debate on this issue between her agent and Godwin: ‘*He was quite annoyed about that – so then Fay said “it ought to be alphabetical at least!”*’⁷⁵ Richard Ingrams had similar recollections as the co-author of *Romney Marsh and the Royal Military Canal* (1980): ‘*she insisted that her name had to go first on the cover, which is quite an odd way of doing the book, because normally the author’s name – the person who has written the book goes first.*’⁷⁶ Godwin often stated that many of the ten co-authored books were her ideas, and the

⁷² See E. Tidyman, letter to Fay Godwin, 18.06.73; C. Causley, letter to Fay Godwin, 20.09.73; F. Godwin, letter to C. Causley, 08.04.75; B. Hines letter to F. Godwin, 22.07.75; F. Godwin, letter to B. Hines 30.07.75; and J. Herriot, letter to F. Godwin 28.05.77, ‘Literary Correspondence’ file, FGA, BL

⁷³ R. Blythe, letter to Fay Godwin, 20.07.70, ‘Literary Correspondence’ file, FGA, BL

⁷⁴ J. Toye, ‘*The world improvement plans of Fritz Schumacher*’ *Oxford Journals, Economics & Social Sciences, Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 36, Issue 2, Pp. 387-403, published online 17.12.11

⁷⁵ S. Toulson, Interview with author, 1.09.10

⁷⁶ R. Ingrams, Interview with author, 18.05.10

list shows her to have secured first billing on three of them, (the third being *Tess: The Story of a Guide Dog* (1981) with Peter Purves). However, in terms of recognition as a co-author, my research would suggest that she was the first British photographer working in the topographical category and collaborating with a living writer to have been acknowledged in this way.⁷⁷ Notwithstanding evidence to the contrary, during an era when photographers were automatically subordinated to the role of illustrator of a collaborative publication, it reveals Godwin's early determination and perseverance to pursue her own art form, through her photography, and on equal terms.

Godwin's 'Literary Correspondences' file revealed how she set up her portraiture practice on a very organised basis, particularly regarding the copyright and conditions of use for the image.⁷⁸ As a photographer drawing on her creative skills it was important that authors liked her work, but clearly it also underpinned her professional reputation. One of her early assistants (1973-6), Mike Abrahams, recalled her advising him that: '*one of the most important things about the literary portraits was that [the person] liked [the results], as that's what made everything else work.*'⁷⁹ The 'everything else' included her preparation for each sitting by familiarising herself with the authors work, this aspect became more critical with the later series of 'Literary Portraits at home' (1980s). Here, Godwin hoped to express something of the artist's work in their image by photographing them in a setting of their choice, as the journalist Jean Smith wrote: '*she sees them in the same light as her landscape photography, trying to convey the spirit of the writers and poets, many of whom she knows well. She would never attempt, she says, to photograph a writer without having read his or her work.*'⁸⁰

⁷⁷ After many consultations with my interviewees from the publishing and academic realms, David Mellor, Ian Jeffrey and Christopher MacLehose independently agreed on the strong probability of Godwin's achievement in this field.

⁷⁸ In general, Godwin's literary correspondences showed a standard set of instructions sent to each sitter to establish the images to be used, she also confirmed how they were to be used (for publicity purposes only), and with her retaining copyright. All sitters also received a complimentary set of prints – strictly for personal use, and those with who she became friendly were often sent copies of her recent work in book form, or as calendars etc.

⁷⁹ M. Abrahams, Interview with author, 17.08.11

⁸⁰ J. Smith, 'Landscape Painter', *The Scotsman* Monday, May 13, 1985, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL, p.6

Some of the best-known examples included '*John Fowles*' (1974) and '*Doris Lessing*' (1975), whose earlier portraits gave them an almost dramatic presence, by presenting them both in a semi-formal manner looking intently out at the viewer, (figs 20, 21), whereas the later ones show both authors in a more relaxed pose, less engaged with the act of being photographed. However, in '*John Fowles*' (1982), there was some considered editing as, he vetoed the ones taken on the Cobb near his home '*mainly because they hark back a little too much to The FLW [French Lieutenant's Woman] and I look too grim*', much preferring '*the Indian warpaint shadowed one*', which clearly presented a wider assessment of the writer and his work, whilst retaining some of the enigma, (fig 22).⁸¹ Similarly, in '*Doris Lessing*' (1980), her middle distance gaze did not invite the viewer into her personal space, but yielded complex visual clues in the profusion of patterns created by her crocheted blanket and blouse, (fig 23).⁸² Perhaps one of the most interesting, if not well-discussed examples (by Godwin) was the second portrait she took of Salman Rushdie (1986), (fig 24). Here, she included – almost presciently, an ornament resembling a hatchet poised over his head, and recalled him commenting that '*he might have upset a few people with **The Satanic Verses** (1988), – but he had no idea of what was waiting for him!*'⁸³ This, and other experiences seemed to encourage in her a belief that photography often enabled something akin to extrasensory perception, which she found '*intriguing*.'⁸⁴

Another portrait sitting that led on to discussions about a collaborative venture took place between Godwin and the writer, JG Ballard in 1976, (fig 25). His correspondence showed how keen he was to work with her, although ultimately they failed to find a subject that was mutually satisfactory to their respective expertise, geographic range as well as the financial considerations.⁸⁵ His reason for declining Godwin's suggested theme of abandoned military buildings around Britain was that it would show him to be the inferior author: '*The bunkers would be an excellent one,*

⁸¹ J. Fowles, letter to Godwin, 01.04.82, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

⁸² Whilst a large number of Godwin's portraits from the '70s also featured sitters in a domestic or favoured environment, clearly she believed the '80s work was something of a departure from her previous approach, therefore I have chosen examples that clearly demonstrate the difference.

⁸³ F. Godwin referring to the Fatwa pronounced on Rushdie, 14.02.89, C. Mapleston, '*Don't Fence Me In – Fay Godwin's Photographic Journey*', DVD First cut, 26.01.13

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ J.G. Ballard, letter to Godwin, 23.12.76, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL

*but the problem is that it would be your book; as I'm not a military historian the only text I could write would be of the atmospheric type, you know the 'brooding monsters with their dark dreams of ...etc' stuff that would lead straight to psueds corner.'*⁸⁶

Yet, from a visual perspective, Godwin clearly felt unencumbered by Ballard's textual concerns as she was later able to incorporate her visual ideas (and complaints) about these MOD remains into other projects including: ***Romney Marsh, Saxon Shore Way, Land*** and ***Our Forbidden Land***. In ***Land***, Ken Garland revealed that their method of sequencing the anthropomorphic qualities in some of the natural or manmade features (echoing Ballard's notion of 'brooding monsters') where they suggested themselves as a narrative, or stand alone images, such as the alien features of the '***Stranded material at Pett Level***' (1980), (fig 26).⁸⁷ Similarly, Ballard took his idea of exploring the '*abandoned stretches of Cocoa Beach around Cape Kennedy since the Nasa cutbacks...abandoned executive housing, empty swimming-pools, deserted hypermarkets...and the kind of people that hang on there*' into a collection of Sci-fi stories ***Memories of the Space Age*** (1988).⁸⁸ These few examples have shown some of the ways in which Godwin was able to convert her personal experience, and growing skills as a photographer into a career as a photographer-author.

The origins of *Remains of Elmet*

The timing of Ballard's suggestion clearly impacted on Godwin's busy schedule in 1976. This was the year in which she had planned to begin her projects with John Fowles (***Islands*** 1978) and Ted Hughes, however, it was also the year in which she was diagnosed with a life-threatening form of uterine cancer (July '76), therefore much of the second half was spent convalescing. Thus the dramatic events in ***Remains of Elmet*** were preceded by episodes of real life drama in the lives of both authors, some of which fed into their collaboration. Godwin's version of their first meeting was regularly repeated in interviews, possibly as it parodied a classic scene of seduction. In September 1970, Hughes' publisher, Faber and Faber commissioned Godwin to do a portrait for his latest publication: ***Crow*** (1970). His unplanned visit to her home was one of convenience for him as his sister/agent lived nearby, but not for

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ K. Garland, Interview with author, 14.08.08 Garland designed eight of her eighteen publications.

⁸⁸ J.G. Ballard, letter to Godwin, 28.01.77, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL

Godwin who was currently in a post-operative condition: *'I was lying in my nightie on a sofa with my knee in stitches, and he carried me on a chair to the garden. We had a very funny session, I had to keep telling him to come in close to camera, I wanted to throw the background out of focus and he stalked round and round, he said 'I feel tethered.'*⁸⁹ The resulting contact sheets (some hundred-plus images in total) are quite revealing of Hughes who was famously camera/publicity-shy, as they showed a relaxed atmosphere with him fixed in a range of emotions, from serious to smiling, pensive to provocative, and almost always engaged with the camera, (fig 27). Additionally, Godwin's comments to her Faber contact, Rosemary Goad showed that he was not in a hurry to leave, rather he showed particular interest in the result: *'He did stay on and marked up lots of roughs for proofing, though the choice is towards those with less expression – he says he can't bear any revealing photographs.'*⁹⁰

The value of this evidence is primarily for the picture it revealed of Godwin. It would of course be reasonable to suggest that she was flattered by Hughes presence and close attention, hence the detailed re-telling of the story, but she was also astute enough to capitalise professionally on those bizarre circumstances, by producing a wide range of unguarded expressions given his reticence before the camera, and her limited physical movement. The image Hughes finally selected is certainly not without expression, (fig 28), indeed it might be said that he opted for a portrait that fell somewhere between sensitive poet and romantic hero, which somehow epitomised the fantasy aspect of Godwin's narrative. As if to counter the playful elements of Godwin's tale, Hughes scholar Keith Sagar (also a friend of the late poet), recently challenged the visual impressions they created. He asserted that the portrait had reinforced the general misreading of Hughes work *Crow* by feeding the myth of his dark image as *'the high priest of a cult of violence.'*⁹¹ He contended, *'Fay*

⁸⁹ *'Homeground: Ted & Sylvia: Love & Loss'*, BBC2 TV, first shown 4.05.2004

⁹⁰ F. Godwin, letter to Rosemary Goad (Faber & Faber), T. Hughes 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL, 1.10.70

Hughes discussed his sensitivity to being in the public eye from the beginning of his published career, by comparing it to *'suddenly walk[ing] into a wall of heavy hostile fire'*, D. Heinz, *'Ted Hughes, The Art of Poetry No. 71'*, *The Paris Review*, Spring 1995, No.134

⁹¹ K. Sagar, 'Hughes, *'Poetry 1966-79'*, *Edward James (1930-1998)*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2013.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/templates/article.jsp?articleid=71121&back>

As an early collector of Hughes' work, Sagar had also bought eight different images of Hughes at the time of the portrait session. See Sagar's, letter to Godwin, 03.12.70, and Godwin's letter to Sagar, 31.12.70, in Ted Hughes, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

*Godwin's much published photographs of Hughes looking bleak in a leather jacket reinforced the public perception of him as craggy and unapproachable...it was shyness, not aggression, which masked, for those who did not know him, his essential gentleness and generosity.'*⁹² The value of Sagar's comment at this point, is to show how Godwin's involvement with Hughes, also exposed her to the controversies and defence systems that surrounded him, also how often her work as a visual author would place her in the crossfire of the critics, a point I will return to further on.

It goes without saying that the more important consequences of the first Godwin/Hughes meeting, was the latter's suggestion that they '*they do a book together.*'⁹³ Hughes spoke of his ideas for the Calder Valley, and '*the need for a visual trigger*', and Godwin's enthusiasm for a joint project was immediate.⁹⁴ In the same year she began the extended series of photographic trips to the Calder Valley region, which later combined family camping holidays, and her becoming involved with a number of local or regional cultural events.⁹⁵ For example, at the Arvon Centre at Lumb Bank she attended various literary workshops, (possibly photographic ones too), and as the poet, Alan Brownjohn recalled, she became a regular visitor able to widen her literary portfolio by photographing visiting writers/poets who attended or taught there.⁹⁶ By contrast, Hughes remained silent on the subject until spring 1976.⁹⁷ Of the many reasons that might account for this, the most compelling are that he either shelved, or simply jettisoned the idea whilst busy with other projects, which included *Cave Birds* (1975) the collaboration with his friend and artist, Leonard Baskin. An additional cause for his reticence is implied in the writings of Hughes scholar, Terry Gifford, who stated that between 1973-4 Hughes suffered from a

⁹² K. Sagar, '*Hughes, 'Poetry 1966-79', Edward James (1930-1998)*' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

⁹³ F. Godwin, letter to Rosemary Goad, 01.10.70, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

⁹⁴ See also Godwin's account of their collaboration in N. Gammage, '*Fay Godwin, Ted Hughes and Elmet*', *The Epic Poise*, Faber and Faber, 1999, pp106-7

⁹⁵ Lumb Bank was originally owned by Ted Hughes before being leased in 1975 (and later bought by) the Arvon Foundation. <http://www.arvonfoundation.org/ted-hughes-and-lumb-bank>
Hughes also suggested Godwin might camp in the grounds before it was renovated. T. Hughes, undated letter (pre- 22.12.75), 'Literary Correspondence' file, BL

⁹⁶ A photographic course run by Philip Jones Griffiths, Daniel Meadows, Martin Parr and Don McCullin (8-13.12.75), and was advertised through the *Co-optic* photographic group of which Godwin was a member (1973-5/6), 'flyer' sent out by *Co-optic*, Co-optic archive, Courtesy of Stephen Weiss
Also, A. Brownjohn, Interview with author, 02.03.11

⁹⁷ T. Hughes letter to Godwin, (undated), her acceptance was dated 27.05.76, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

general depression.⁹⁸ Yet Godwin remained vigilant to his return to the project, on other fronts as well as building a presence in the West Yorkshire Arts scene. This can be gleaned from her '73 correspondence with the poet, Charles Causley, where the latter's reply to her enquiry about Hughes hints that he may indeed have been keeping a low profile: '*I haven't been to N. Tawton and have no news of Ted. Fled?*'⁹⁹

Equally, there are a number of reasons that brought Hughes back into Godwin's developing career, and I will now demonstrate how other literary publications and events brought them back together, besides Godwin's own drive to recover the project. Firstly, the publication of '*Worlds: Seven Modern Poets*' (1974), an anthology of poems featured Godwin as one of three photographers commissioned to reflect aspects of the poets' lives through people, places, or events that had inspired their art across the spectrum of their life experience.¹⁰⁰ In addition to this description of the photographers' role, an intriguing link was also made between their creative powers and that of the poet, as the reader was further informed '*the photographs... are not 'illustrations', but a reminder that poems, like poets, come out of the world we know, and that is where they belong.*'¹⁰¹ Unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this thesis to speculate on Geoffrey Summerfield's wider meaning, other than his emphasis on the democratic nature of the discipline – as with photography, however, one can state that it presented an interesting snapshot of the ongoing relationship between photographers and poets in Britain during this period.

The poets represented by Godwin's '*Worlds*' were: Charles Causley, Ted Hughes and Adrian Mitchell, all of whom she knew through her flourishing literary portrait practice. Here, she presented Causley as a man most 'at home' – at home, with his cat and china figurines, tellingly posed with his back to the door under the large latchkey, as if to make sure it stayed closed, (fig 29). His life – in the world, was represented by a short series of dramatic Cornish seascapes (alluding also to his Naval career), tamed

⁹⁸ T. Gifford, *Ted Hughes, Routledge Guide to Literature*, Routledge 2009, p.21

⁹⁹ C. Causley letter to Godwin 12.09.73, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL. The two poets were friends, and regional neighbours, Causley lived in Launceston Cornwall, and Hughes lived in North Tawton, Devon.

¹⁰⁰ G. Summerfield (Ed.) *Worlds: Seven Modern Poets*, featured: Charles Causley, Thom Gunn, Seamus Heaney, Ted Hughes, Norman MacCaig, Adrian Mitchell, Edwin Morgan, Photographs by Fay Godwin, Larry Herman and Peter Abramowitsch, Penguin Education, 1974,

¹⁰¹ Ibid, '*Introduction*' p.15

by round views of Causley's home town of Launceston: with kids playing in the river, the school he both attended and taught at, all brought back to a contemplative close by evocative and historical churchyard masonry.¹⁰² Conversely, Godwin placed Mitchell in amongst the people: reading, with their amused expressions reflecting his story back to the reader as that of an accomplished performer, (fig.30). Indeed Mitchell's delight with that image (both literally and descriptively), prompted him to request a copy some ten years later as he believed it '*capture[d]the spirit of a happy reading*.'¹⁰³ Mitchell's environment suggested a more urban-metropolitan focus as opposed to Causley's quiet corner on the periphery, and his subversive posters pinned to the wall spoke of a provisional lifestyle, best conducted in company.

Interestingly, the Hughes' section stands out in the book for being the only one not to feature a physical portrait of 'the poet in his world'. This not only supports the theory that he was distancing himself from people outside his circle, but meant Godwin's visual interpretation had to be gleaned from biographical information penned by Hughes a decade earlier.¹⁰⁴ The images followed a similar format to the other schemes, that is, twelve of Godwin's '*Calder Valley*' images were grouped with a mixed selection (twenty) of his poems. Here the core themes of the incipient book (*Remains of Elmet*) emerged with pictures of the region's unforgiving terrain and the life it begrudgingly supported or consumed through its mills, ministry and moors. In the first image, a row of terraced cottages are huddled beneath the heights of 'Scout Rock' near Hughes' birthplace, matching his doom-laden descriptions about the omnipresent '*eye of its towering gloom*', (fig 31).¹⁰⁵

In the images that followed Godwin appeared to have constructed a virtual or spiritual presence of Hughes' accompanying narrative about the indelible effects of this dark and troubled landscape on his psyche.¹⁰⁶ She juxtaposed remote moorland farmsteads, such as the one owned by his relatives, with the unpeopled mill towns, from where so

¹⁰² Ibid, '*Charles Causley*', pp.16-53

¹⁰³ A. Mitchell, letter to Godwin, 03.11.83, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL

¹⁰⁴ G. Summerfield (Ed.) '*Acknowledgements, Ted Hughes*', *Worlds: Seven Modern Poets*, p.280. Also, *Earth-Moon 'Information about Ted Hughes*', '*The Rock*', 1963

<http://www.ted-hughes.info/bibliographies/full-bibliography/bibliography-details/the-rock.html>

¹⁰⁵ T. Hughes in G. Summerfield (Ed.) '*Ted Hughes*', *Worlds: Seven Modern Poets*, p.122

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, '*Ted Hughes photographs by Fay Godwin*' *Worlds*, p.122-7

There is no evidence to support the fact that Godwin had access to Hughes' descriptions beforehand, but as she appeared not to have had access to him either, it seems reasonable to suggest she would have been given his script as guidance.

many men had been surrendered to the Great War.¹⁰⁷ In her other images she showed vestiges of physical life, or symbols of human survival, sitting in the shadow of their mortality. Hence three elderly men (depicted supping beer) are underpinned by an image of the cemetery; a flock of grazing sheep is succeeded by a ghoulish skeleton frozen in its death throes; and a lone child fishes amongst the ruins of lost industry. Finally, Godwin's iconic image of '*Heptonstall Backlit*' (1971) filled a two-page spread, and brought the programme to a close on an equally dramatic note, (fig.32). On a popular level, this image might pass for an eighteenth or nineteenth century history painting by Claude Lorrain or Samuel Palmer respectively, with its allegory of the pastoral taking centre stage, and the Stoodley Pike Monument – a symbol of mortality perched prominently to the left. However, it would also have struck a deeply personal chord with Hughes, as the church bathed in sunlight also housed the remains of his parents and first wife, Sylvia Plath.¹⁰⁸

Godwin's strategic thinking for Hughes pictorial programme in *Worlds* was also well timed. As more recently, Keith Sagar has described how those images constituted the 'trigger' that returned Hughes to the Calder Valley Project.¹⁰⁹ Inspired by Godwin's images in the book, Sagar invited her to exhibit more work (thirty) at the *Ilkley Literature Festival* (May'75), in which Hughes was participating.¹¹⁰ Something of this order of events can also be discerned from a letter Hughes sent to Charles Monteith (his editor at Faber), in response to the suggestion that a book on Yorkshire was in order, Hughes' reply included: '*...I returned from up there [recently] thinking that I would now do what I thought of doing 5 years ago – a book of Yorkshire pieces with photographs by Fay Godwin. After I'd vaguely suggested it to her, she went up there, became infatuated with the region...and is now the photographer of that whole area.*'¹¹¹ It was an interesting comment by Hughes, as he appeared to both connect and distance himself from Godwin and the original offer to work with her. In the first

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, '*Ted Hughes photographs by Fay Godwin*' *Worlds*, p.124

¹⁰⁸ This image also appeared in B. Gaskins (Ed.), *Image 5: Perspectives on Landscape*, Arts Council of Great Britain, p.13

¹⁰⁹ K. Sagar, 'footnote 9', *Poet and Critic, The Letters of Ted Hughes & Keith Sagar*, p.56.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

Also see N. Roberts, Ch.10, '*Return to the Calder Valley: Remains of Elmet, Wolfwatching and Elmet*', *A Literary Life*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p129 for his account of events, in which he also noted that Hughes '*took away some rough prints from the festival*'

¹¹¹ C. Reid (Ed.), '*Ted Hughes letter to Charles Monteith, 21.05.76*', *Letters of Ted Hughes*, Faber and Faber, 2007, pp.376-7

place, he appeared ready to commit himself to the collaboration, yet in the second place, the earlier offer had been downgraded to a casual comment.¹¹² Clearly Godwin had become more interesting to Hughes as a co-author, and one reason that suggests itself is that by the mid-70s Godwin's professional status had increased significantly. That is, her emergence as a published author (*The Ridgeway*, 1975) would undoubtedly have made Hughes consider her a more worthy partner.

The example of *Worlds* and the significant role it played in bringing Godwin and Hughes together helps construct a stronger history than her standard, yet partial explanation. Although it is also worth considering other compelling factors that would have helped cement the partnership. Virtually the same age, they both possessed forthright characters, meaning that Godwin's 'directness' and Hughes' 'bluff Yorkshire man' provided a strong starting point that might, but did not polarise them.¹¹³ She was erudite and somewhat exotic, and deeply familiar with many aspects of the literary/publishing world, also, she was a great admirer of his work. On a more personal level, their private lives had both been marked by emotional trauma, that is, both had experienced highly complex, and competitive marriages that ended quite dramatically (Tony Godwin and Sylvia Plath respectively). Following the collapse of their partnerships, not only were both left as single parents, but also with their unshakeable 'ghost' partners (albeit from opposing sides of a failed marriage).¹¹⁴ Clearly, his personal history was more universally known, but on a more reduced scale hers too was publicly aired, particularly within the garrulous confines of British publishing. On numerous occasions Godwin spoke of her unresolved feelings about rejection acting as a force that drove her forward professionally, before managing to champion her husband's shade by establishing her own successful career. In particular, she repeated almost mantra-like his parting shot: '*You'll never succeed in photography, why don't you go and get a nice safe job like a secretary?*' vowing she

¹¹² Hughes' letter containing his 'official' offer to Godwin was undated, however her reply, and her enthusiasm for the project suggest that she would have made a prompt response.

(See) F. Godwin, letter to T. Hughes, 27.05.76, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

¹¹³ Godwin's abrupt manner was widely acknowledged by friends, family and colleagues. And in a recent interview, Glyn Hughes: Poet/Novelist and friend of Ted Hughes described the latter as being '*...very talkative, but at the same time he wouldn't waste time talking to anyone who didn't interest him. He had no manners about that — he simply refused to talk to anyone who didn't interest him.*'

G. Hughes, Interview with P. Kingsnorth, '*The Salmon God*', June 2011,

<http://dark-mountain.net/stories/books/book-2/the-salmon-god>

¹¹⁴ After Tony Godwin's departure in 1969 the couple did not divorce.

would ‘*never be a doormat again.*’¹¹⁵

The latter comment clearly betrayed a range of negative emotions felt by an abandoned figure, and it would be irresponsible to underestimate its effects. Indeed Godwin’s son, Nick spoke of his mother’s long period of depression in the wake of his father’s departure.¹¹⁶ Yet it also fed into her early determination not to be described as a ‘female photographer’, rather, as a person to be judged on merit. It has often been suggested that Godwin’s fluctuating stance on the gender issue was partly premised on a need for self-protection, as a single professional woman operating in a predominantly male occupation, especially during the early ‘70s. Additionally, there appear to be very few occasions upon which Godwin drew attention to the drawbacks connected to her gender/status in relation to her profession, although she often presented herself to the press as vulnerable through bouts of poor health.¹¹⁷ One of the few examples when Godwin did stipulate the gender differences was in *The Oil Rush* (1976), in which she noted: ‘*Several times I was refused permission to make trips to rigs, platforms, pipelaying barges and other facilities, because I am a woman. All the more thanks, therefore, to the firms which did not refuse permission despite that fact.*’¹¹⁸ Therefore something of Godwin’s fierce intent would have been part of the force that Hughes encountered in 1970 – her determination to ‘beat the pundits’, and neither is it unreasonable to think he may have recognised, even admired her energy and ambition to fight back; conversely it may also have fuelled his distance.¹¹⁹

Another important subject that linked Godwin and Hughes, and upon which both would eventually take public stands was their early interest in green issues. Having hailed from the pre-war generation, both were shaped by the more conservative values of that era, yet their declared sympathy for certain facets of alternative life choices came with a predisposition towards the decade’s growing environmental concerns.

¹¹⁵ S. Lawley, ‘*Desert Island Discs*’, *BBC Radio 4*, 17.3.02

¹¹⁶ N. Godwin, Interview with author, 16.12.06

¹¹⁷ Godwin often discussed her health issues in interviews with journalists in the local and national press, particularly during the cancer episode (1976). Examples include: A. Donaldson, ‘*Fay Godwin – photographer with a positive view of life*’, *Glasgow Herald*, 19.07.76, L. Adams, ‘*In the Picture*’, *Guardian*, 28.07.76, J. Simon, ‘*Cancer haunts a brave woman*’, *Evening Express*, 31.08.77, ‘Newspaper Reviews’ file, FGA, BL

¹¹⁸ F. Godwin, ‘*Photographer’s Note*’ *The Oil Rush*, Quartet Books, 1976, p.5

¹¹⁹ Godwin’s notion of committing ‘an act of vengeance’ in response to her husband’s negative reaction to her new career as a photographer was regularly cited by interviewees.

For example, both gravitated towards complementary medicines, treatments and organic foods, indeed their correspondence reveals an incremental list of recommendations for a range of natural remedies.¹²⁰ Many friends and colleagues commented on Godwin's inclinations towards this lifestyle, for example, her agent Anthony Stokes made a sweeping but symptomatic observation that '*she had always been a bit brown rice – even before the post-cancer diet.*'¹²¹ This view was confirmed by her friend (and editor), Jill Norman in her discussion of Godwin's early patronage of local independent health food shops.¹²² Furthermore following her illness in 1976, her preference for unorthodox treatments increased exponentially, with her faith in its healing powers firmly maintained by a strong sense of self-discipline.

Godwin's recognition of nature and its beneficial properties began in her childhood with her mother's influence, yet accentuated sharply following her recovery from cancer. Her mother, Stella Simmonds had been brought up in the rural wilds of a large Interstate park in America, (*Taylor's Falls, Minnesota*) and Godwin's brother, Donald described aspects of their mother's mainly outdoor life as engaging with the natural environment, often through the people whose livelihoods it supported: '*Stella would go out and gather herbs, read the level of the river for loggers...spending much of her time there. She had – as Fay had later – the concept that there were other ways of medicating illness.*'¹²³ Here one can detect a form of 'nature lyricism', relating to the ideology inculcated in the American psyche through the nineteenth century Transcendentalists: Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman. Godwin's mother, a second-generation child of European settlers – most of whom were eager to strengthen their ties with their new country, had also been educated to a professional standard, therefore would certainly have been exposed to, if not shaped by these teachings, which were to redefine the settlers' cultural identity, and enhance their relationship with the land.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Whilst it is true that the majority of letters from the '70s were focussed on the project, as the friendship grew, so did their recommendations for 'alternative' health/welfare options, particularly from the early '80s forward.

¹²¹ A. Stokes, Interview with author, 10.10.12

¹²² J. Norman, Interview with author 27.01.09

For a useful list of Hughes' involvement with different environmental activities, visit Ann Skea's '*The Environment and Society*' in '*Notes and Queries*' of *The Ted Hughes Homepage* <http://ann.skea.com/THHome.htm>

¹²³ D. Simmonds, Interview with author, 14.11.06, GFA

¹²⁴ Ibid

As well as being a trained artist, Godwin's mother was also qualified to teach, and educated both her children at home until the age of eight. Thus there was ample opportunity for her to instil her own cultural and moral values, as well as her personal history into their lives. Another more compelling example showed her invoking a more sensory response to nature in a letter she sent to the young Godwin during a particularly unhappy phase at boarding school in South Africa:

*...from the time I was quite young I started storing up "little shelves of peace" in my mind. One says – "in my mind's eye" but with me it is often "in my mind's ear". Sometimes I open the shelf where breezes through the pines in Taylors Falls mingled with the murmur of the river below our house – it has always been such a pleasant memory that if sleep didn't come immediately the rest and peace was as good as sleep... Learning the secret of easy sleep or at least rest and peace will always be a safeguard to health that most valuable possession in the world.*¹²⁵

From both examples, I would suggest that Stella nurtured in her children a vital sense of nature representing healing, pleasure, sustenance and comfort, all of which could only encourage a growing respect for it, and as became patently clear in Godwin's case, there was also a nurtured desire to protect it.

Strong maternal influences and liberal access to the countryside were also part of Hughes' formative years, and both have been identified as significant factors that informed his writing. As Terry Gifford noted:

*Ted inherited from Edith an altogether different style of spirituality, for Edith Hughes was a psychic – she was a seer and had premonitory visions of tragic events... Ted Hughes was convinced that he had inherited her gift and that he was a seer too.*¹²⁶

I would also like to acknowledge Roger Taylor's comments to me in 2005 regarding the relationship between Godwin and her mother.

¹²⁵ S. Simmonds, letter to Fay Simmonds (Godwin), 10.08.43, GFA

¹²⁶ T. Gifford, *The Cambridge Companion to Ted Hughes*, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p.15

In a letter to student, Anne Lorraine Bujon (16.12.92), Hughes referred to ‘*An attentive mother who told incessant stories*’ and later ‘*bought a whole library of collected poets...I can’t remember reading it at the time, but it was a sign of her intent, of her desire.*’¹²⁷ Additionally, American cultural values had a definitive influence on Hughes’ work, as well as sharpening his environmental awareness. In the first instance, he became familiar with the literary style through his early studies of D.H. Lawrence’s work, particularly the latter’s ‘nature’ poetry, which graduated from the traditional ‘Georgian’ model to the free verse style of Walt Whitman. For example Lawrence’s poem: ‘*Snake*’ (early 1920s), which focussed on the oscillating relationship between man and Nature as sometimes violent, and other times harmonious, revealing the power and fragility of both; the same theme was a constant element in both Hughes and Godwin’s work. During an interview in 1995, Hughes also spoke of being ‘directly affected by American poetry in the mid-50s via a Penguin anthology’ stating: ‘*...I completely bypassed contemporary English poetry, apart from Auden and Dylan Thomas...everything in that book seemed exciting to me...*’¹²⁸ In the same interview, Hughes also spoke of the cultural influences he absorbed from his life with Plath: ‘*When I met Sylvia I also met her library, and the whole wave hit me. I began to devour everything American.*’¹²⁹

In the second instance, Terry Gifford has described how Hughes became “*properly aware*” of *ecological and conservation issues*’ during the years he spent living in America (1957-9), this was further underpinned by his early reading of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962), which ‘*suddenly revealed the whole of America as a poisoned land.*’¹³⁰ Gifford’s point being, and for the purposes of this thesis, was that because most of the early critical focus on Hughes’ portrayals of nature had been based on his more exotic excursions in esoteric ideas and beliefs, less attention had been given to the ecological or environmental interests that had informed them. On the other hand, as Neil Roberts has also pointed out Hughes had courted, if not earned some of those wider misunderstandings: ‘*At least from the 1970s on, Hughes*’

¹²⁷ C. Reid (Ed.), ‘*Ted Hughes to Anne-Lorraine Bujon 16.12.92*’, *Letters of Ted Hughes*, pp.624

Terry Gifford also referred to Hughes’ mother ‘*support[ing] her children’s early interest in literature...and [his] later interest in esoteric forms of knowledge.*’ T. Gifford, ‘*Ted Hughes*’ pp.8-9

¹²⁸ D. Heinz, ‘Ted Hughes, The Art of Poetry No. 71’, (np)

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ T. Gifford, *Ted Hughes*, pp.13-4

writings suggest a conflicted and contradictory attitude to all forms of hunting animals, including fishing.’¹³¹

Aspects of Hughes’ colliding values can be glimpsed in his poem: ‘*The Canal’s Drowning Black*. Here, the environmental awakening of his later years is interspersed with strong childhood memories of fishing in the Rochester canal, where a keen eye and quick hand lure loach from the ‘...bleached depth fungus.’¹³² And into which the dead fish are later carelessly despatched having succumbed probably not to the ‘acid rain fall-out/From Manchester’s rotten lung’ as his poem suggests, but to the de-oxygenated confines in the younger Hughes’ ‘two pound jam-jar/On a windowsill.’¹³³ In Godwin’s accompanying image, ‘*Near Hebden Bridge*’ (1977), the tranquil setting of the same meandering canal is shown in the process of being returned to nature, its industrial duties done, (fig 33). Her focus was a more formalist one, with the Rorschach-like reflections lending an abstract effect to the scene, and creating the banded gradations of grey that was later to earn her praise from Mark Howarth-Booth, (as noted at the beginning of this chapter). As a pairing to the poem, the gloomy cast complimented Hughes’ heavy ponderings on the polluted waters and airways of the region, thus those same reflections cast jagged black shadows on the waters provoking a tentative link.

As suggested earlier, health issues were a major preoccupation throughout Godwin’s adult life, and had a considerable effect on her work. The experience of her mother’s early death (through a late diagnosis of cancer) poignantly coinciding with Godwin’s seventeenth birthday, not only emphasised the personal loss, but also made her more aware of her general well-being.¹³⁴ A childhood friend, Carlotta Hacker wrote: ‘*she was not a hypochondriac...I had the feeling she expected to die young. But she wasn’t a gloomy person.*’¹³⁵ Whilst another: Zelide Cowan, spoke of Godwin using art therapy to deal with the death of her mother when the family were posted to Denmark later that same year (1948).¹³⁶ Thus when Godwin had to deal with her own form of

¹³¹ N. Roberts, ‘*Fisherman Hughes: River*’, *Ted Hughes, A Literary Life*, p.141

¹³² T. Hughes, *The Canal’s Drowning Black, Remains of Elmet* p.74

¹³³ Ibid p.74

¹³⁴ Telegram from Sidney Simmonds to Stella Simmonds’ family in America, 17.02.48, GFA

¹³⁵ C. Hacker in correspondence with the author, 1.10.07

¹³⁶ Z. Cowan, Fay Godwin Memorial, British Library conference Centre, 16.07.05, (DVD), Recorded by Charles Mapleston, Malachite Film Co.

life-threatening cancer in July 1976, in addition to the sudden death of her estranged husband earlier that year, it must be accepted that some of the fallout from these two brushes with mortality had filtered into her work.¹³⁷ Many of her colleagues and family concurred with this explanation, and other assignments that followed, for example, Helena Srakocic-Kovac, stated: '*Her health was so much a part of her that it cannot be separated from her work - it guided her in what she could do physically.*'¹³⁸

The last point about Godwin's health can be demonstrated in relation to my earlier discussion about the dark tonal ranges throughout *Remains of Elmet*. Godwin often referred to them also reflecting 'the blackness' of her physical and emotional condition at that time: '*Partly what helped me see that was talking to John Blakemore, he had talked about his own work being very closed in and dark...during a very bleak period in his life.*'¹³⁹ In fact the latter's influence can be seen in some of the close-up images in *Remains of Elmet*, particularly in her narrative of water studies: '*Blake Dean*', '*Hardcastle Crags*' and '*Blake Dean*' (1977), (figs 34,35, 36). Here Godwin's meditative and sensory portrayals of water as snow, ice and free-flowing in the Calder Valley have clear echoes of Blakemore's '*Metamorphoses*' series taken at Linch Clough, Derbyshire (1971-4), and later showcased in *John Blakemore, British Image 3* (1977), (figs 37,38). In Gerry Badger's '*Introduction*' to Blakemore's work, he wrote of the restorative role these studies had played after periods of trauma in his personal life, by enabling a form of convalescence through long meditations with specific sites in the landscape.¹⁴⁰ Thus in their respective works, both Blakemore and Godwin have fixed two points of focus, and two sets of timescales in the images, to show the movement as light radiating brilliantly but silently from the ice, in contrast with the surging sounds made by fast coursing streams. Blakemore acknowledged the connection between these pieces, adding,

Photographers spend hours sequencing their work to try and demonstrate, or convey meaning and response to something that has attracted their attention, drawn

¹³⁷ Tony Godwin died in New York, 15.03.76

¹³⁸ H. Srakocic-Kovac, email Interview with author, 30.11.09

¹³⁹ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA Part 6, Tape 3, Side B

¹⁴⁰ G. Badger, '*Introduction*', *John Blakemore British Image 3*, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1977, pp.7-8

*them in, and engaged them for a measure of time, as in a deep and meaningful conversation or communion.*¹⁴¹

The first image: '**Blake Dean**' in Godwin's triptych-style arrangement encouraged an almost religious contemplation of its main subject, the curved white form of the snow. In common with many other natural formations such as clouds or flames it seems to morph into a human skull-like shape thrown into greater relief against the dark backdrop. It recalls Holbein's skull in '**The Ambassadors**' (1533) spinning enigmatically out of the foreground signifying mortality over the world of human achievement, and leading thoughts back to some of *Remains of Elmet* central themes, (figs 39,40). The chilling thought works in conjunction with the wintery scene depicted, and yet there is room for further speculation, as perhaps the season had turned, the snow appeared to be melting, heralding the arrival of spring. From another perspective, the central motif assumes a foetal-shape with a closed eye – provided by a strand of grass, suggesting new life, with new possibilities as the cycle begins again, thus positing a regenerative theme. A number of Hughes scholars have commented on this constructive direction in *Remains of Elmet*, in particular Anna Skea, who saw it at work most potently in '*the metaphysical aspects of the sequence [of poems]*', in which higher forces were finally satiated by the sequence of birth/destruction and re-birth of the Calder Valley society.¹⁴² Also, in Peter Hegarty's review of Godwin's images in the book he clearly appreciated a regenerative scheme in process, stating: '*the moorland does not offer much; minimal compositions abound in this landscape. Snow melting and returning to its source is almost a metaphor for the valley itself...*'¹⁴³

The theme of water with its life, death and regenerative properties was a vital part of life in the Calder Valley region, and its positive/negative properties were at the heart of the book. It permeated every level of existence from cradle to grave: from baptism in the chapels, powering the mills, to the inclement climate as part of the agricultural calendar. And its destructive force was shown quite emphatically in Hughes'

¹⁴¹ J. Blakemore, Interview with author, 18.06.10

¹⁴² A. Skea, '*Regeneration in Remains of Elmet*' in *The Challenge of Ted Hughes*, by K. Sagar, The St Martin's Press, 1994, pp.117 and 127

¹⁴³ P. Hegarty, '*Fay Godwin Calder Valley Photographs*', *Open Eye*, November 1979, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

companion piece to Godwin's images: '*Emily Bronte*'. As Hughes moved through his homage to the author's brief, but celebrated life he referred to her passion for the moors, yet intimating she died by its elemental hand: '*The wind on Crow Hill was her darling/...But his kiss was fatal/...The streams she loved too well/ That bit her breast. /The shaggy sodden king of that kingdom/Followed through the wall/and lay on her lovesick bed. /...*'¹⁴⁴ Here, Godwin's narrative can be seen to reflect aspects of Bronte's life, death, and symbolic new life as a significant figure in the history of British literature, through both the skull and regenerative motif in '*Blake Dean*'. In the second image '*Hardcastle Crags*', there is the suggestion of a human form lying on the ground, almost like a 'chalk outline' created by the water running down the rocks. It recalled Glyn Hughes' reference to one of Emily Bronte's '*greatest pleasures in life*' – to lie in remote places on the moors, and was articulated in Ted Hughes' poem by '*the stone swelled under her heart.*'¹⁴⁵ In the third image the long finger-like pendants of ice signify the grip of death that finally claimed her, returning the cycle back to the first image of the foetus-like concept of new life, and reflecting Hughes' final line: '*her death is a baby-cry on the moor.*'¹⁴⁶ Whether these elements were part of Godwin's intentions is of course unknown, however, if they were, it is tempting to think that it was also symptomatic of her own recovery and her joy at being alive, having so recently faced the loss of her husband, all over again, followed by her own period on the brink of death in 1976.

Hughes' immediate written response to Godwin's illness was one of great encouragement and forward planning, which signalled both his friendship as well as his commitment to their forthcoming project.¹⁴⁷ In the first instance, he responded to her news by suggesting that she '*...concentrate everything, and try to turn the current positive...If long term plans and activity can be part of that, then maybe there was*

¹⁴⁴ T. Hughes, '*Emily Bronte*', p.96

¹⁴⁵ G. Hughes, *Yorkshire: Millstone Grit Revisited*, Photographs by Peter Hollings, Chatto & Windus, The Hogarth Press, 1985, p.21, and T. Hughes, '*Emily Bronte*', p.96

¹⁴⁶ T. Hughes, '*Emily Bronte*', p.96

¹⁴⁷ Hughes gesture of hope came despite the recent death (from cancer) of his Father-in-law (Feb 1976). His optimism, quoting the recent recoveries of others 'close' to him, must have helped inspire Godwin's desire to recover, he wrote: '*It's one of the departments of fate where even the worst can suddenly reverse itself*', T. Hughes letter to F. Godwin, 4.07.76, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL

Also, Godwin subsequently referred to Hughes 'supportiveness', and her gratitude at this time, which included his visiting her in hospital. F. Godwin, 'Interview with V. Williams', BLSA, Part 6, Tape 3, Side B

something mysterious in the way our book suddenly resurrected and proposed itself.¹⁴⁸ He then used the main body of the letter to outline his ideas (partially referred to earlier), for which Godwin had already spent six years in preparation, and as both perceived their art to be part of a healing process, Hughes' words must have read like an *elixir vitae* at this low ebb in her life.¹⁴⁹ His revival plan clearly struck a deep chord with Godwin, as at the time, they spoke to her own strong instincts to survive and realise her ambitions, also later, as she regularly credited the role that their collaboration had played in aiding her recovery from cancer.¹⁵⁰ In the same interview (*The Lady*), Hughes' words rang through her descriptions of how her work had come to represent her recovery stating:

*For me being ill was a creative experience. I thought of all the ways I could get better and found the most constructive. I am a great believer in positive thinking and there can be no more positive aspect to living than taking responsibility for your own life.*¹⁵¹

The main point of this section has been to show some of the compelling circumstantial, and personal ingredients that helped fuse Godwin and Hughes creative partnership in the *Remains of Elmet*.

Glyn Hughes

Glyn Hughes (whose views of the Stygian scenes inspired by the industrial landscape were discussed earlier) is a significant figure in this chapter of the thesis, for the role he, and his work played in both editions of *Elmet*. His work: *Millstone Grit* (1975) was an anecdotal travel book of his voyage round the Calder Valley region, and contained twenty-five images taken mainly by him, to serve as illustrative or

¹⁴⁸ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 4.07.76, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

¹⁴⁹ Ibid

Additionally, In a letter to her brother, Godwin made clear the intrinsic value of her work to her well-being describing the 'wonderful jobs' lined up prior to her illness (Hughes and *Islands* with John Fowles), good print sales in the States, and the V&A were buying a set of *Ridgeway* prints. She also added 'she was very aware of the sweetness of life at the point when she was so close to losing it!' F. Godwin, letter to Donald Simmonds, 25.07.76, GFA

¹⁵⁰ B. Byrne, 'The Eye of the Camera', *The Lady*, 31.10.95, p.66

¹⁵¹ Ibid, Godwin's discussion also included references to the 'healthy eating' programme she followed, which most other interviewees described as a Spartan-like regime of liquidated home-grown wheatgrass, and raw vegetarian food, some of which received a dedicated amount of willpower on her part, (J. Godwin, interview with author 09.05.07)

informative additions to the text, with little attempt to grandstand their aesthetic properties. This format was normal practice in topographical studies, and many examples can be found in books such as WA Poucher's *Snowdon Holiday* (1943) and *Escape to the Hills* (1952). Ted Hughes was impressed by the author's ability to combine '...the region's history and his own sensations' and recommended it to Godwin as the kind of model he was looking for in *Remains of Elmet*.¹⁵² Prior to this time, the two writers were less well acquainted, but as Glyn Hughes recalled, '...his admiration for that book...deepen[ed] my association with Ted.'¹⁵³

In fact, Godwin was already aware of Glyn Hughes' book because she had been commissioned to take its cover picture, which was in strong contrast to her dramatic, backward looking images in *Remains of Elmet*.¹⁵⁴ The double-sided jacket in colour, created a panoramic effect that joined hilltop farms to the towns below, from where factory funnels rose up and linked into the criss-cross of walls networking the land (fig 41). Clearly, seasonal colour not only softened the effect of the region's dramatic topography, but applied thus it also reduced the scope for portraying its gruelling industrial history in an instant. Whereas in her *Remains of Elmet* images, Godwin's townscapes: '*Heptonstall*' (1970), '*Colne*' (1970) and '*Todmorden from Blackshaw Head*' (1970) are all depicted in isolation as either oppressively compact and utilitarian, swathed in smoke, or submerged in mist respectively, (figs 42,43,44). Another sense of unease hung over the solitary farmsteads of '*Stanbury Moor*' (1977) and '*Crimsworth Dean*' (1977), (figs 45,46). The former lay darkened and distanced under an ominous cloudscape, almost impervious to the presence of light. Whilst in the latter, light seems to have been used as a negative force, creating a grotesque architectural grin as the cattle advance like a line of sacrificial bulls.

In some ways Glyn Hughes became a slightly controversial figure in Godwin's first book with Ted Hughes. Not only did his critical review of *Remains of Elmet* cast doubt on the success of their collaboration, but with time, his views proved inconsistent with his later actions. That is, firstly, he delivered a lengthy and enthusiastic review of the poems, then in a brief reference to the images as '*superb*'

¹⁵² T. Hughes letter to F. Godwin, 4.07.76, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

¹⁵³ G. Hughes in correspondence with the author, 1.09.10

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

he instantly undermined them by suggesting: '*it would be better to have issued them as a separate volume: they are a romantic tour.*'¹⁵⁵ Secondly, within six years he reversed the circumstances by producing a revised edition of his own book entitled: ***Millstone Grit Revisited*** (1985), in which, arguably the integrated photographic programme by a professional photographer: Peter Hollings, shared some compelling parallels with ***Remains of Elmet***. That is, they are highly contrasted, carefully angled monochrome prints infused with their own dimension of drama, mood, and narrative as well as relating to the text. This had been a deliberate aim by Glyn Hughes (and probably his agent/publisher), who had personally sought out a local landscape photographer in order to produce a more interpretive theme in the images.¹⁵⁶

Hollings' images, intentionally unpopulated, offered their own '*romantic tour*' in a more impersonal and considered view of the Calder Valley than Glyn Hughes' original scheme of candid snaps.¹⁵⁷ His remote moorlands and farmsteads under gloomy skies, or the skeletal remains of ecclesiastical architecture in a misty setting had irresistible echoes of Godwin's first ***Elmet*** images. Although it must also be added that he reflected (to varying degrees) certain distinctive aspects of other established photographic styles, both past and contemporary, to the mid-80s that marked him as a photographer of his times. Most notable is the firm nod to Bill Brandt's images in ***Literary Britain*** (1951), who Hollings agreed was a big influence.¹⁵⁸ In particular, the grainy cloudscapes, or the receding greys into white and black, all of which amplified the recognisable landmarks of the region such as '***Oats Royd mills, Luddenden, Calderdale***' (1984/5), and '***Wainhouse Tower, Halifax***' (1984/5), respectively, (figs 47,48). Whilst in the panoramic image of '***Todmorden, West Yorkshire***' (1984/5), (fig.49), in which a valley long 'faced' with the concrete, steel and brickwork constructions of its various human inhabitants strongly evoked the '*emotionally distanced topography*' of Ron McCormick's

¹⁵⁵ G. Hughes, '***Myth in a landscape***', '***Guardian Books***', ***Guardian***, 24.05.79, p.16, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

¹⁵⁶ Glyn Hughes' account of setting out to find a '*first class photographer*' for his new edition in which he made a particular point about wanting somebody local, 'who would provide an inner knowledge of the landscape'. Peter Hollings' exhibition catalogue: ***Millstone Grit***, travelled in five Yorkshire venues: 28.9.85-17.09.86, p.3

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, Hollings stated: '*A landscape is a very pure thing, and setting people in it creates a conflict, a contradiction that puts me off.*' p.5

¹⁵⁸ P. Hollings in correspondence with the author, 13.08.13

'*Aberbeeg Junction, Wales*' (1978), or John Davies' '*Durham Ox, Sheffield*' (1981), (figs 50,51).¹⁵⁹ Lastly, in '*The Wedding of Luke and Anne, two newspaper sellers in Halifax*' (1984/5), the predominantly elderly congregation caught both smiling and scowling into the camera, mid-celebration, would have sat easily with Parr's *Non-Conformist* series from his Hebden Bridge period (1974-80), (fig 52). However from an authorial perspective, the book remained Glyn Hughes', as according to Hollings, Hughes also retained control of the layout by selecting and positioning the new images to illustrate the words.¹⁶⁰ Yet when asked about any cross-fertilisation of ideas between *Millstone Grit* and *Remains of Elmet*, unsurprisingly Glyn Hughes remained of the opinion that it was solely in the text, of which his came first.¹⁶¹

The last point reveals some of the tensions and anxieties that existed between a visual and textual collaboration, with both artists competing for territory and public/critical acknowledgement. In the case of Godwin and Hughes, he was clearly the more established partner experienced in working with a number of visual artists, particularly Leonard Baskin in *Crow* (1970) and *Cave Birds* (1975). In Professor Elisabeth Bergmann Loizeaux's discussion of the latter she described how Hughes belonged to a century long tradition of poets demonstrating '*an increasing awareness of the visual body of language...and in collaborative ventures in texts combining words and images.*'¹⁶² Her argument built on Hughes' own perception of the interaction between words and image on paper, enabling him to see poems as physically alive, and how their reading was generally ekphrastic in nature.¹⁶³ All of which should have indicated a solid and fertile basis for his project to develop with Godwin, however, Hughes confidence showed its first sign of wavering during the final year leading up to publication. In a letter predominantly assigned to agree pairings, he suggested on two occasions it might be better to divide the work, in the opening paragraph he tentatively suggested:

I wonder if it would be better to have poems and pictures completely separate

¹⁵⁹ D. Mellor, *No Such Thing As Society*, p.110

¹⁶⁰ P. Hollings in conversation with the author, 07.08.13

¹⁶¹ G. Hughes in correspondence with the author, 1.09.10

¹⁶² E. Bergmann Loizeaux, '*Reading Word, Image, and the body of the Book: Ted Hughes and Leonard Baskin's "Cave Birds"*', *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol.50, No.1 (Spring 2004), Published by Hofstra University, p19 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4149252>

¹⁶³ Ibid, p.21, see p.26 for Bergmann's discussion on the ekphrastic nature of the relationship

– as in Evans and Agee’s *Let us now praise famous men as though they should not illustrate each other so much as be concerned with the same thing....?*¹⁶⁴

Hughes reference to *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) is interesting mainly because of the parallel between his show of nerves, and that of writer James Agee’s to Walker Evans’s images. As Joseph Millichap’s research has shown, Agee experienced a crisis of confidence regarding his ability to equal the impact of Evans’ powerful images based on personal and professional reasons, which included the competitive element between text and image.¹⁶⁵ Regarding the latter, some of the more obvious reasons put forward by Millichap were: firstly that Evan’s images had been produced before Agee had started his text, instilling a sense of panic in his creative process; secondly because photography was still quite a new medium; and lastly because Evans had previously received amazing reviews for his work in *American Photographs* (1938).¹⁶⁶ The resolution, as Millichap concluded was to place text and image in different sections, so there was no sense of one outweighing the other in the eyes of the viewer.¹⁶⁷

These points raise similar questions about Hughes and Godwin’s working relationship, as over the years, he often expressed a sense of fluctuating ambiguity on his collaborations, in particular the photographic ones. As already mentioned, it was mainly nurtured by the competitive element of text versus image, where he sensed the latter lost out, shortly after *Remains of Elmet* was published he admitted to Stephen Spender: ‘*The style was an adjustment to photographs – you know how photography and verse normally clash. I tried to hit a dimension outside the visual finality of the picture with minimum contradiction. Usually failed.*’¹⁶⁸ Some fifteen years later, his viewpoint had not altered on this matter as he informed a student of his work:

...in *Remains of Elmet*...I aimed for a blurred focus, generalised mood evocation in each piece – something that would harmonise with Fay Godwin’s

¹⁶⁴ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 05.01.78, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL – unfortunately there appears to be no copy of her response.

¹⁶⁵ J. Millichap, ‘James Agee, Walker Evans, and the dialectic of documentary representation in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*’, *Southern Quarterly* (48:1) 2010, pp.84-5

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, see pp.85, 86 and 88-90

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.86-7

¹⁶⁸ C. Reid (Ed.), ‘Hughes letter to Stephen Spender 09.09.79’, *Letters of Ted Hughes*, pp.426-7

*photographs, but would avoid that painful collision of sharp visual image and sharp specific verbal image, in which the verbal image, after a moment of psychological distress, always loses.*¹⁶⁹

In a second collaboration: **River** (1983) with photographer, Peter Keen, Hughes voiced his additional concerns to Glen Hughes about the use of colour: ‘...*these river pictures - colours and brightness - displace words, I feel. Maybe we should have put the pictures all together in a mid-section.*’¹⁷⁰ Interestingly, Hughes had already asked Godwin for her views on this matter, complaining that colour, ‘*leadens my response...excludes me...giving me no part to play in recreating the image.*’ adding he preferred the black and white ozalids.¹⁷¹ There was certainly some consistency on this issue, which probably also reflected a cultural mistrust of colour photography as serious art in Britain, at that time, as he later conceded to Glyn Hughes, that **Remains of Elmet** had in fact realised a fusion of creativity: ‘...*Fay Godwin's moody pieces were one thing - there was a shadowy area where words and pictures came together.*’¹⁷²

Some Hughes’ scholars have supported Hughes doubts about the **River** collaboration believing Keen’s images to be a distraction to the text.¹⁷³ Neil Roberts described them as ‘*less successful*’ than Hughes clearly reciprocal venture with Godwin, which he believed encouraged meditation and ‘*repeat viewing*’, whereas Keen’s images ‘*though skilful and often beautiful, connect with the poems only on the most superficial level.*’¹⁷⁴ For Roberts, and others, the worst offence amounted to the inertness of the images in a text that was ‘...*preoccup[ied] with subjectivity...*’.¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, some felt Hughes was mistaken in his apparent regrets, believing the co-authored books delivered some of Hughes best work. Keith Sagar wrote, ‘*In spite of his reference to collaboration as ‘like running a three-legged race, much of*

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, ‘*Ted Hughes to Anne-Lorraine Bujon 16.12.92*’, p.633

¹⁷⁰ T. Hughes, letter to Glyn Hughes, 09.09.83, ‘*Glyn Hughes archive*’, Manuscript Catalogue: ‘ADD MS 88617: 1956-2001’, BL

¹⁷¹ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 14.06.83, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL

¹⁷² T. Hughes letter to Glyn Hughes, 09.09.83, ‘*Glyn Hughes archive*’, BL

¹⁷³ N. Roberts, *Ted Hughes, A Literary Life*, p.140

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p.140

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p.140, Roberts added ‘*this was commonly noted in reviews*’

*Hughes's finest work was in this form...*¹⁷⁶ Sagar went on to quote the examples of: ***Cave Birds***, ***Remains of Elmet*** and ***River***.¹⁷⁷ The interesting point here is that Sagar appears to be saying that Hughes had also expressed reservations about working with graphic artists and not just photographers, which effectively reverts the discussion to his original concerns about the relationship between image and text, and which of the two might have the more powerful impact on the shared page.

Elizabeth Maslen's discussion of the three works quoted by Sagar (above) drew on the musical term: '*counterpoint*' to explain their successful cohesion only if approached as whole entities.¹⁷⁸ She believed that despite an oft-contrasting presentation, each work would be diminished if not read and absorbed together: '*...poems and pictures each pursue their own melodic line, creating harmony and discord within an overall unity...*'¹⁷⁹ Turning to each collaboration she noted the main components that brought fusion, such as the fertile links between Baskin and Hughes' creative thinking that enabled image to prompt text, and vice-versa, which touched upon similar reciprocal processes in ***Remains of Elmet*** (established earlier in this thesis).¹⁸⁰ In the latter collaboration, Maslen began by arguing that Godwin's dramatic monotones presented the ideal vehicle for the early autobiographical/retrospective nature of Hughes' poems, managing to avoid '*romantic nostalgia*' through their separate and complex visions of the region.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, she noted the content of their works contained a flow enabling image and text to move in and around each other varying their distance, whilst linked by '*the binding force of Elmet...*'¹⁸²

Yet as Maslen embarked on her analysis of ***River***, it was this latter feature that set ***Remains of Elmet*** apart from the other two, as well as many other collaborations of this nature. That is, the unusual format of photographs and poems appearing on both verso and recto pages, rather than the usual arrangement of the former facing the latter

¹⁷⁶ K. Sagar, '*Recognition*', *Hughes, Edward James (1930–1998)*, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ E. Maslen, '*Counterpoint: collaborations between Ted Hughes and three visual artists*', *Word and Image*, vol.2, No.1, Jan-Mar 1986, p.33

¹⁷⁹ Ibid

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 33–4

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p.38

¹⁸² Ibid, p.39

as illustration, for example: *Positives* by Thom and Ander Gunn (1966), or *The Tree* by John Fowles and Frank Horvat (1979).¹⁸³ Ken Garland and Ron Costley have both confirmed that this deliberate design feature was intended to show the integral relationship, as well as the equal status between Godwin's work and that of her co-author.¹⁸⁴ *River*, Maslen acknowledged, presented the greatest challenge particularly because the standard layout with its dictatorial notion of 'echo' largely encouraged the frustration voiced by Roberts et al (above) and obstructed them from 'look[ing] for counterpoint'.¹⁸⁵ Accordingly, in the absence of any other connective features, her argument for cohesion seemed to rest mainly with the contrasting features in the two authors' works, which 'celebrat[ed] the overarching idea better by diversity than by deliberate echoes of each other's skills.'¹⁸⁶ The main point here has not been to dilute or undermine Maslen's argument, particularly with the last example, which through constraints of space is unable to be discussed further. Rather, it has been to demonstrate the astute nature of Godwin's decision, not just by keeping text and image together, but to fully integrate them and thereby avoid automatic reflexes anticipating illustration.

The available evidence suggests that Hughes never really resolved the complex problem of combining image and text on the page, nor, more importantly for the purposes of this thesis, did he satisfy himself with his various treatments of the *Elmet* series. In one of his last letters to Keith Sagar he described his three attempts at tackling it:

I began the writing with autobiographical pieces ...then that diabolical fear of subjectivity argued me into writing impersonal 'mood pieces'...Later on I...made another mistake...converting mood pieces to autobiographical meditations...But I think the genuine inspiration for the whole scheme had gone...I gradually realised the moment had passed...Fay's photographic vision of the region had also changed...In the end I simply piled together everything related to Calder Valley – and more or less left it again to Fay. Unsatisfactory, although I like her pictures. Because of this

¹⁸³ Ibid, p.40

¹⁸⁴ K. Garland interview with author, 14.08.08

R. Costley, interview with author, 08.07.10, Costley designed both *Elmet* (1994) and *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1998)

¹⁸⁵ E. Maslen, 'Counterpoint', pp.40 - 2

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p.42

*coming and going, I never got the text...I wanted. I feel I let Fay down...except that first time round...Best would have been to build the whole sequence round my father and mother, and let Fay's pictures provide backdrop, merely. I would have the book that I wanted, and that others would relate to.*¹⁸⁷

This suggests that Hughes anxieties were located in the very personal nature of the project, his perceptions about not having delivered an ideal version of his responses to his birthplace, partially frustrated by his long years of self-censorship on the subject of confessional poetry.¹⁸⁸

Godwin's anxieties

Hughes' letter to Sagar (above) has relevance for the complexities, as well as the artistic compromises made by both authors in their collaboration. In the first place, his reference to having left the Calder Valley work to Godwin 'again', recalls my opening comments regarding the prominent role she took in sequencing images and text. Her standard rebuttal of that suggestion was tempered in one interview when she stepped back from her first assertion that: '*many of the pairings were his choice*' to the more revealing admission that '*We did the sequencing together, though Ted was happy to follow my suggestions.*'¹⁸⁹ In addition to this, Maslen's discussion around the unusual format of their work, followed by Garland and Costley's confirmation that it was intended to present Godwin's work on an equal status with Hughes (above) would also suggest her taking a controlling role in the project. However, this would also need to be seen in the context of another comment I made earlier, which was how the 'defence systems' that surrounded Hughes affected some of Godwin's dealings with him. For example, in the production phase, Ken Garland, a trusted friend as well as Godwin's first choice of graphic designer, felt compelled to withdraw from the project at a late hour following irresolvable differences with Hughes' agent (and

¹⁸⁷ K. Sagar (Ed.), '*Letter from Ted Hughes to Keith Sagar, 14.10.98*', *The Letters of Ted Hughes & Keith Sagar*, pp.286-7

¹⁸⁸ See Terry Gifford's account of 'Hughes regrets regarding the long over due publication of *Birthday Letters*, and the release it finally brought him', T. Gifford, *Ted Hughes*, p.28.

The strength of Hughes regret was also borne out by Carol Orchard's words to Godwin, that upon being given a new pen for his birthday (1998) Hughes wrote '*Carol has given me a new pen for my first birthday*' C. Orchard's letter to Godwin, 18.03.99, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

¹⁸⁹ T. Gifford, '*Interview with Fay Godwin on the Making, with Ted Hughes, of Remains of Elmet (1979) and Elmet (1994)*', in *Thumbscrew*, No.18, Spring, 2001

sister), Olwyn Hughes.¹⁹⁰ Garland recalled receiving several phone calls from the latter, ‘*to check the typeface and weight that should be used...it was all about how Ted Hughes' poetry should be shown in the book...*’¹⁹¹ This view clearly reflects the concerns expressed by Hughes as discussed above, yet it also showed why, as the less-established author, Godwin might have felt she needed to protect her own interests whilst operating in a more powerful arena.

In the second place, it might be said that Godwin was taking her own artistic risks by working with Hughes at this time. That is, following the long gestation period of the project, the eventual publication of their work (1979) came at an unfavourable transitional period in British landscape photography. As will be alluded to throughout this thesis, part of the wider cultural shifts that took place towards the latter years of the decade, meant that photography moved towards a more critical stance on representations of landscapes, by focussing the current social and environmental aspects of rural Britain, rather than celebrate its romanticised history, or view it as a museum piece. Indeed Simon Armitage noted ‘*During the 1970s and 80s...to support Hughes poetry was to support the man himself, a man whose ideologies could have been described unfashionable, and whose poetic style was seen by some as stubborn and entrenched.*’¹⁹² More recently, Ian Jeffrey has echoed those comments, describing the Hughes collaboration as an unusual choice at that time as it ‘*hark[ed] back to neo-romanticism.*’¹⁹³ Yet on the other hand, given the long history of their project, including the friendship that eventually developed, even withstanding Hughes unfashionable reputation, Godwin’s personal ambition, as much as her enthusiasm to work with him clearly overrode any external, or critical perceptions.

A measure of their friendship can be gleaned from the strongly supportive, and placatory letter Hughes sent to Godwin after the publication of *Remains of Elmet*.¹⁹⁴ It was in response to her distressed reaction to the critical reviews, in particular

¹⁹⁰ K. Garland, Interview with author, 14.08.08

Also see F. Godwin’s letter to Ted Hughes, 16.12.77, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL, in which she expressed her pleasure regarding Garland’s involvement.

¹⁹¹ K. Garland, Interview with author, 14.08.08

¹⁹² S. Armitage, ‘*Over the hills and far away*’, *Guardian*, 18.02.06
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2006/feb/18/poetry.simonhughes>

¹⁹³ I. Jeffrey in correspondence with the Author, 02.09.11

¹⁹⁴ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 31.05.79, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL

regarding her contribution to the book.¹⁹⁵ Later, he offered similar solace to Peter Keen when *River* was reviewed, describing it to Godwin as ‘[Keen’s] first experience of being publicly humiliated in front of his friends and neighbours. He didn’t realise that was part of the package...’¹⁹⁶ On this issue it should be noted, Godwin’s sensitivity to rejection – a failing to which she admitted in her discussion with Val Williams, meant she took criticism of her work very deeply (as will be seen in the discussion of her colour work in Chapter Three).¹⁹⁷ Thus whatever Hughes personal misgivings regarding his collaboration with Godwin, at this troubling time he wrote sensitively about the essential role played by her images for the creation of his poems particularly emphasising the reciprocal nature of their working relationship, the result of which was ‘...one circulation, one organism...’ also noting that ‘several of my friends call it my best book...they mean that the mutual inter-dependence of poems and pictures puts my poems in quite a new category’¹⁹⁸ Hughes’ final comment: ‘See how much less impact and power Olwyn’s edition has – with the lack of pictures.’ might be interpreted as less a disloyalty to his sister, whose role as his agent probably absorbed far worse.¹⁹⁹ Rather it presented more of an insight to the mutual respect in their friendship – that he felt able to admit the comparison despite his own reservations expressed elsewhere.

From a third perspective there was the recent legacy of *Islands* (1978) Godwin’s photographic essay on the Scilly Isles with John Fowles essay on the generic subject of islands. This had been the first literary/aesthetic project to mark her progress from the documentary aspect of the walkers’ guides, although it was the *Ridgeway* images that inspired Fowles to want to work with her.²⁰⁰ Yet she often spoke of *Islands* as a personal disappointment. Apart from the unplanned ‘soot and whitewash’ prints of her images, the main criticism – from the British press, had been aimed at the marked disparity between text and image.²⁰¹ In contrast to the critical reception of *River*, here,

¹⁹⁵ Ibid

¹⁹⁶ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 09.11.83, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL

¹⁹⁷ F. Godwin, Interview with Val. Williams, BLSA, Part 10, Tape 5, Side B

¹⁹⁸ T. Hughes, letter to Godwin, 31.05.79, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, Here, Hughes was referring to the slightly earlier Rainbow Press edition of *Remains of Elmet*, (April 1979) which contained only four of Godwin’s images.

²⁰⁰ J. Fowles, in *Islands* by John Fowles and Fay Godwin, Jonathan Cape, 1978, p.2

²⁰¹ J. Clement, ‘*Photographers at Work: Fay Godwin*’, *British Journal of Photography*, 02.10.81, p.1004. This article is representative of several other interviews Godwin gave to reiterate ‘her side of the story’ in *Islands*.

the stronger reproofs had been reserved for Fowles' firstly for the '*self-indulgent*' nature of his venture, and secondly for the confusion of title, which formed no relationship with the images, thus Godwin's work also came under closer scrutiny.²⁰² In one article her work was unfavourably compared with Paul Strand's *Tir a Mhurain* (1962), admittedly, mainly for its '*dark tones*' rather than its omission of the human element, yet that point had already been noted by Charles Causley, who described her work as '*... splendidly dramatic, if at times a bit unrelenting*', exacerbated by its lack of subject connectivity with the text.²⁰³ Undoubtedly the mild criticism from a friend (Causley), and unflattering comparison to one of her photographic heroes (Strand) would have made her even more sensitive to negative reviews regarding her contribution to the *Remains of Elmet*. Finally, it is also worth noting that although the American press gave *Islands* a warmer reception, it would have given little consolation to Godwin, as Fowles – long-established in his literary success, was also awarded greater credit for the book.²⁰⁴ Unfortunately, constraint of space has necessarily reduced this discussion of the Godwin/Fowles collaboration, however, the main purpose has been to demonstrate the wider circumstances of her vulnerability as the conventionally decreed weaker author, and some of the barriers (both real and perceived) that she faced in the first decade of her profession.

Millstone Grit and Methodism

The second publication by Glyn Hughes to have an impact on Ted Hughes was his novel: *Where I Used To Play On The Green* (1982).²⁰⁵ For the latter, it convincingly recreated the transformative effect of Wesleyanism in the region, and increased his desire to revise the original Calder Valley project in order to produce an edition more closely focussed on his family connections with the region.²⁰⁶ In a letter to the author, Ted Hughes congratulated him on his accomplishment stating: '*Most of*

²⁰² Several British newspapers described Fowles work as 'self-indulgent' including The Listener (no other details on cutting), and the R. Gordon Talyor's '*Recent Books*', *British Journal of Photography*, 01.06.79, pp. 522-3, 'Newspaper Reviews' File, FGA, BL

²⁰³ R. Gordon Talyor, *Recent Books*, p. 523 and C. Causley, '*Sounds that give delight*' *Guardian Books, Guardian*, 2.11.78, (np), 'Newspaper Reviews' File, FGA, BL

²⁰⁴ For example, Stephen Goodwin's brief reference to the images also draws on the example of counterpoint to justify their non-illustrative role. '*The Scillies: 'An eternal waiting for a foot to land', Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colorado, 15.04.79 (np), 'Newspaper Reviews' File, FGA, BL

²⁰⁵ G. Hughes in correspondence with the author, 01.09.10

²⁰⁶ The correspondence does not give an exact date when Hughes suggested a second edition (*Elmet*, 1994). His letter of 30.05.85 discussed '*re-do[ing] the whole book*', with Godwin's second response 08.08.85 clearly stating '*...it would be wonderful to do a new edition...*', 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

*all you've capture that nightmare...it made my stomach contract – horrible recognition.*²⁰⁷ The rapid spread of Methodism in Britain during the mid-eighteenth century planted its deepest roots in many of the industrial towns, and Ted Hughes described its indelible effect on the Calder Valley region as a '*local mutation of it.*'²⁰⁸ In his opinion it was a result of the region's challenging physical environment, and the people those conditions bred: '*barbarous*', whose wild energies were swiftly converted through the evangelising zeal of Parson Grimshaw into '*fanatic[al] enthusiasts.*'²⁰⁹ This conversion of emotions and values was then consolidated within the very fabric of the region, for as Hughes went on to relate, '*The men who built the chapels were the same who were building the mills. They perfected the art of perching their towering, massive, stone, prison-like structures on drop-offs, where now you would just only graze sheep.*'²¹⁰ As has already been noted, Hughes acknowledged the legacy of Methodism in the region when he wrote to Godwin in 1976, and as Terry Gifford pointed out:

*There was also a serious minded work ethic in the Methodist strain in Hughes education, which he received from his mother, Edith Farrar Hughes. As a child Ted went with his mother to a Methodist chapel, and he would later satirize this particular religious mentality in poems like 'Mount Zion'*²¹¹

The inextricable threads of mill life and religion run throughout the poetry in *Remains of Elmet*. In Hughes' poem, *The Trance of Light* his fast pace registered the same rate at which the region fell under the iron-like grip of Methodism, mercilessly meshing work, religion, through the loss of life in the Great War, and the unbearable burden it continued to inflict on successive generations.²¹² Its opening lines '*The upturned face of this land*' revealed the breadth and impact on the region's collective psyche alluded to in '*The mad singing in the hills.*'²¹³ In Glyn Hughes novel, *Where I Used To Play On The Green*, Parson Grimshaw became the archetype for Methodist ministers delivering a terrifying brand of fire and brimstone

²⁰⁷ T. Hughes letter to Glyn Hughes, Undated '*Glyn Hughes archive*', BL

²⁰⁸ T. Hughes, '*Notes: Elmet*', *Elmet*, Faber & Faber, 1994, p.10

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid, p.11

²¹¹ T. Gifford, *The Cambridge Companion to Ted Hughes*, p.15

²¹² T. Hughes, *Remains of Elmet*, p.20

²¹³ Ibid

sermons, transforming the almost primitive behaviour of the weaver communities into another type of excess: religious zeal. And *'The prophetic mouth of rain'*, again recalls Glyn Hughes' earlier references to Bosch and Breughel's paintings, where the mouth of hell - a gaping aperture, performed the dual function of either spewing forth demons, or swallowing whole swathes of humanity on the 'Day of Judgement.'²¹⁴ In Ted Hughes' poem he acknowledges the acutely felt loss of the men-folk by conjuring up a vision of ranks of women – the new workforce – marching into the noisy prison-like workplace weighed down physically, mentally and spiritually *'Under migraine of headscarves and clatter/Of clog-irons and looms/...and...biblical texts.'*²¹⁵

The last third of the poem moved through the decline of industry and religion in the region and into the present, which is where Godwin's companion image was set. She was also deeply familiar with particular aspects of the strict Protestant work ethic that had shaped Hughes youth, as it had also shaped her own. Her mother, who had been *'raised by her maternal grandmother and ...two ancient uncles – Presbyterian missionaries in the Mid West...'* had inculcated the same 'work first and play later' mindset into Godwin and her brother. Therefore it is feasible that she incorporated some of that psychological awareness into her images enabling multiple readings.²¹⁶ *'Near Mankinholes'* (1977), (fig 53), presented a bleak hilltop farmland, in which the light has just broken through a leaden sky. Her focus, a formalist composition of the right-angled shape made by the radio mast, and stonewall also created a comical relationship between the line of sheep and the tip of the mast, which suggested the latter were being fed into a cannon and launched into the sky creating the gaps in the cloud. There appears little to connect image and text, and so it would remain until one discovered that the origin of the word *'mankin'* referred to a race of *'fierce wild men'* who, according to one theory, inhabited the caves ('mankinholes') in the pre-historic Pennine landscape.²¹⁷ Given this context, we are cast back into Hughes' world of *'barbarous'* natives, transformed by Methodism into an army of brainwashed machine workers under the watchful eye of God, the Mill-owner and latterly King and Country. This can be read in Godwin's image, where the herd of

²¹⁴ Ibid

²¹⁵ Ibid

²¹⁶ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA, Part 1, Tape 1 Side A, 1993

²¹⁷ *Lumbutts & Mankinholes Conservation Area, Character Appraisal*, Calderdale Council, 2008, p.5-10, <http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/conservation/conservation-areas/index.html>

sheep/converts/sacrificial lambs, significantly filing from the Biblical 'right', pass behind the stone cross monument and through the gap in the wall/kingdom of heaven/hell, under the break in the clouds where the sun/deity beams down on the dutiful.

A more direct link between text and image can be found in *Mount Zion*. Here again Hughes main focus was the suffocating blanket of Methodism imposed on the region since the eighteenth century. Imposed also on his earliest conscious memory, for as with the inescapable occupation of 'Scout Rock' (in *Worlds*), he referred to the chapel's location a black, oppressive, and terrifying presence sited just '*Above the kitchen window...*' where it not only blocked out the daylight, but excluded any trace of the natural world as well.²¹⁸ In E.P. Thompson's discussion of the efficacy of Methodism as a lubricant to the Industrial Revolution – in terms of a compliant workforce, he too described these religious buildings in similar terms: '*The box-like, blackening chapels stood in the industrial districts like great traps for the human psyche. Within the church itself there was a constant emotional drama of backsliders, confessions, forays against Satan, lost sheep...*'²¹⁹ Thus Godwin's close-up of the chapel in '*Lumbutts*' (1977) created a claustrophobic atmosphere of equally negative emotions, (fig 54). All the main components: the straight line of the path, the 'moving wall' of shrubs and the cropped roof ensured that the focus was on the solemn, symmetry surrounding the entrance – a one way journey, and a re-creation of some of Hughes' darker descriptions of being indoctrinated in the faith as a child: '*Marched in under, gripped by elders/Like a jibbing calf/I knew what was coming.*'²²⁰ The inclusion of the Rhododendron bush on the right of the frame added personal significance for Hughes, who informed Godwin quite early on in the project that they '*depressed*' him.²²¹ This comment was later expressed by Hughes as a detested symbol of 'the establishment' and its deadening and deadly bureaucracy in

²¹⁸ T. Hughes, *Remains of Elmet*, p.82 also see LM Scigaj's discussion of this poem in, The *Poetry of Ted Hughes*, University of Iowa Press, 1986, p.244

²¹⁹ T. Hughes letter to Glyn Hughes, undated, '*Glyn Hughes archive*', BL

Also, E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Vintage, p.368

²²⁰ T. Hughes, *Remains of Elmet*, p.82

²²¹ T. Hughes letter to Godwin, 31st 76 (sic) (estimated October or December '76), 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

‘*Rhododendrons*’, a general condition comprehended by Godwin, and appropriately portrayed as a funerary urn set amidst ‘*the policeman’s protected leaf*.’²²²

Martin Parr’s project on Methodism: *The Non-Conformists*

Four years after Godwin began her trips to the Calder Valley region, the photographer, Martin Parr moved to Hebden Bridge (1974-80) and also began documenting the area. His five-year residency in the *Albert Street Workshop* was part of a community-based documentary practice committed to social change, as stated on one of its flyers: ‘*We all enjoy living and working in Hebden Bridge and we want the people we are living amongst to see what we do. We hope in this way we can make a contribution to this community.*’²²³ As David Mellor’s work has shown, it was a rural representative of other more urban-focussed organisations springing up across Britain between the mid-‘70s and ‘80s, perhaps the most notable example being the *Half Moon Photography Workshop* in London.²²⁴ Within that time, Parr and other ex-Manchester Polytechnic students took an active role in the town’s transformation, from its post-industrial decline to a centre for alternative arts, pre-empting the prosperous tourist destination of current times.²²⁵ One of Parr’s interests in recording ‘*surviving folkish and industrial forms*’ was the ongoing activity of the non-conformist chapels despite a significant rise in secularisation in Britain since the early 1960s.²²⁶

Comparison with the work of Martin Parr

Parr’s *Non-Conformist* project presented a marked contrast with Godwin’s more intimidating interpretations of the chapels, as discussed (above) and as shown in ‘*Slack*’ (1977), (fig 55). In her image of Mount Zion Baptist Chapel virtually every facet of the scene was exploited to produce yet another dramatic scene of dread and fear to the beholder. Here, in the bleak winter snow scene the architecture appears more severe from its high viewpoint, and is approached through a foreground of

²²² See *Remains of Elmet* for ‘*Lumbutts*’ by F. Godwin, and ‘*Rhododendrons*’ by T. Hughes, pp.86-7

²²³ The Albert Street Workshop flyer, Co-optic archive, Courtesy of Stephen Weiss

²²⁴ D. Mellor, *No Such Thing as Society*, pp. 53,

Also see: S. Bezencenet, ‘*Photography and the Community*’, in S. Bezencenet and P. Corrigan (Eds), *Photographic Practices: Towards a Different Image*, Comedia Publishing Group, 1986, pp. 135-65

²²⁵ D. Mellor, *No Such Thing as Society*, p.53

²²⁶ Ibid, and Callum G Brown, ‘*Introduction*’, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000*, Routledge, 2009, p.1

gravestones with their grim reminders of mortality. There is no hint of the racier activity revealed in the Victorian archives, which along with the '*zeal and Christian Mission*' they also recorded the '*...singing and dancing...frequent accusations of "fornication" leading to illegitimate babies and temporary excommunication after being forced to appear before the congregation...and perhaps above all the drunkenness which led to severe criticism.*'²²⁷ In Parr's images: '*Crimsworth Dean Methodist Chapel*' (1975-80), '*Mankinholes Methodist Chapel*' (1975-80), and '*Crimsworth Dean Methodist Chapel*' (1975-80), he reflected a more realistic picture of the diminished power of the church during the '70s, with its crumbling edifices, declining numbers and a predominantly elderly congregation, all suggesting a former shadow of Hughes' childhood memories, (figs 56,57,58). The almost ghostly presence of the latter in its lonely moorland setting, seemed to epitomise the abandonment of the faithful, whose descendents had dispersed to the busier urban centres and now were congregating around the new gurus on television, and the emerging cult of celebrity and consumerism.

Interestingly, the two photographers came closest to representing a shared view (and title) of the skeletal remains of Staups Mill, or '*Jumblehole Clough*' (1973) in the mid-70s, (figs 59, 60). In Godwin's image there is a suggestion of Victorian gothic that tips over into melodrama through her use of the vignetting device. It exudes mystery accentuated by the autumnal gloom, which corresponded perfectly with the temporal sentiments of Hughes' accompanying poem, '*Mill Ruins*'. Here, he constructed something of a lament for the lost industry to modern global economics, describing the wave of petty vandalism it set in progress amongst the inheritors of that loss by comparing their deeds to distant ancestors – '*Like the earliest/ Homeless Norsemen.*'²²⁸ On the other hand Parr's image presented something of an enigma, if taken as representative of his Calder Valley work of (some barely) surviving industry and leisure activities, because clearly this subject had long since ceased to function. It may not share Godwin's dramatic properties, with its lighter tones and early-summer setting, yet it does have a similar mystique and nostalgia, particularly with both of

²²⁷ K. Sutcliffe, 'Mount Zion Baptist chapel, Heptonstall Slack', Todmorden and Walsden, (np), <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~todmordenandwalsden/mountzion.htm>

²²⁸ T. Hughes, *Remains of Elmet*, p.38

them choosing to highlight the displaced or fallen headstone.²²⁹ Parr was not an influence on Godwin during the 1970s, although he was certainly picked up on her radar during the early '80s with his new colour work, as will be discussed in chapter three. However, as two photographers clearly determined to succeed during that decade, not only were they both noted for their 'growing stature' but astute predictions were also made for them both to become '*major figures in British photography*.'²³⁰

In Godwin's work with Hughes it has been established that it brought her the greatest fulfilment in her many experiences of being a collaborative author. It was a process that she, at least, believed was fully reciprocal, and as I have demonstrated, that belief was fully supported in Hughes correspondence. The spark he ignited lit a strong flame in Godwin's desire to succeed in her career as a photographer, one that at first, he appeared only to have sensed, yet later appreciated as her potential to become a highly successful artist. This section has shown the catalyst that Hughes signified in Godwin's early career. Not only did Godwin's early photographic work move in a new direction after she met him, but it also accelerated as she swiftly responded to, and expanded beyond his original suggestion.

An Introduction to Co-optic

Godwin began her career by allying herself with the publishing world, and some of its most eminent writers and poets in the early '70s. However, she also needed to create a profile for herself as a member of Britain's burgeoning photographic community, and though mainly self-taught, and certainly self-motivated, Godwin originally began forming a network with photographers via her established publishing connections. In 1966, her husband, Tony Godwin introduced her to the freelance photographer, Euan Duff, and it was the latter who encouraged her initial interaction with other student photographers at Chelsea College. This also came to include her work on his social documentary project at Gospel Oak, from which Godwin produced a large, but largely

²²⁹ The following extract hints at the mill's decline from the close of the C19th. Charlestown History Group, '*Jumblehole Clough*', Staups Mill, a cotton spinning mill, '*On September 24th 1896, about 20ft of the retaining wall of the upper dam collapsed. The water rushed down Jumble Hole causing great damage, but no casualties.*'

<http://www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk/charlestown/mills.html#staup>

²³⁰ C. Osman, *Creative Camera Collection 5*, Coe Press, 1978, p.8

unused archive, he recalled: *'What Fay really needed was the company of other photographers, so I set up an evening class [just for her] and she would come...and work with whatever photographers were still there.'*²³¹ In 1972, close friend and publisher, Nina Kidron introduced Godwin to Robert Golden from who she initially learnt the Zone System, as well as discussing a wide range of other topics and techniques of photography, he recollected that in the four to five years they were in touch: *'I saw her develop from essentially an amateur "snap-shooter" who was serious about trying to make pictures, to somebody who could actually control the medium to a degree.'*²³²

Godwin also employed a series of photographic assistants to help with darkroom and printing requirements. Depending on the level of their technical skills, there was generally a good measure of her absorbing their knowledge, which was scrupulously acknowledged in publications and exhibitions. Photographer, and former employee at the Photographers' Gallery 'Print Room', Helena Srakocic-Kovac noted that the quality of Godwin's prints improved enormously when she began working with Helen McQuillan (1979-82), Kovac noted, *'Helen had a lot to do with Fay's early success with collectors. [She] studied at Trent when Paul Hill, Tom Cooper, Christopher Siberling were there...[the] Americans...were specially insistent on perfect print quality...Helen was not only a good photographer...but a wonderful printer.'*²³³

In return, the assistants often benefited from Godwin's publishing/business skills and contacts, and various other opportunities that arose – even after they left her employment.²³⁴ For example, Caroline Forbes worked for Godwin from 1974-6, yet she recalled how in the early '80s when *'Fay turned down the offer to do **The Three Peaks of Yorkshire** with Harry Rée [part of the Walker's Guides series]; she recommended me instead...'*²³⁵

²³¹ E. Duff, Interview with author, 13.11.09 & email correspondence: 27.01.11.

Godwin's archive suggests that her Gospel Oak work covered 1968-70, although the evening classes only ran throughout 1966.

²³² R. Golden, Interview with author, 9.05.11 & 02.06.11

²³³ H. Srakocic-kovac, Interview with author 30.11.09. Kovac was the former Print Room Manager at The Photographers Gallery (1975-9)

²³⁴ All of Godwin's previous assistants spoke of her great generosity in providing contacts and many other work opportunities.

²³⁵ C. Forbes, Interview with author, 20.07.09. Forbes also went onto work with Shirley Toulson on *The Drovers Roads of Wales II, Pembrokeshire and the South* (1992). Fellow photographer Dorothy

Godwin's sense of reciprocity was also connected to the period in which she began operating. The ethos of which was born of the same 1960s/70s counter culture philosophy promoting alternative lifestyles such as the self-sufficiency movement, or social activism as defined by the Women's Liberation Movement. In the early '70s there was a keen sense of community in the arts, thus with photography setting out as a revitalised industry on a very limited support structure, it also relied on a fragile, or partial system of mutual effort across the country. To demonstrate some of these points in more depth, it would be useful to look at Godwin's first formal membership of a photographic organisation - Co-optic, a group that was formed upon co-operative principles shaped by '60s idealism, but also dealing with the '70s experience of a rapidly developing consumerist society.

The emergence of Co-optic²³⁶

Co-optic was a London-based collective of mainly freelance photographers from diverse backgrounds, and its official operations began in June 1973.²³⁷ The group was essentially the creation of businessman and 'self-trained' photographer Stephen Weiss, following discussions with other '*like-minded people*' including Gerry Badger, Peter Baistow, Neil Gulliver and Peter Turner who also became members of the group's first executive/council.²³⁸ As a co-operative, it aimed to progress along voluntary and democratic lines, that is, to be owned and run by its members with any profits from their activities including: seminars, exhibitions, and publications to be used as funds for other projects. Its early success was due in part to Weiss' business acumen, motivational skills and financial resources; the latter enabled him to devote an almost full-time focus on the group's overall progress.²³⁹ It was also a product of

Bohm was also approached by Godwin to work on the Wildwood House walkers' series for **Hampstead: London Hill Town** (1981) with Ian Norrie. Godwin had proposed the project for herself as a subject for an earlier (failed) bid to secure the annual Arts Council Bursary, before succeeding in her 1978 application. D. Bohm, Interview with author, 10.07.09

²³⁶ G. Alexander, '*Real Britain? A postcard from the 70s*', conference paper delivered in '*Picture this: postcards and letters beyond text*', University of Sussex, 25-6 March 2011

PLEASE NOTE: All information – unless otherwise stated has been taken from the documents, posters etc that form the Co-optic Archive, with the kind permission of Stephen Weiss.

²³⁷ The idea was first mooted in 1972, and preparations began in the same year, however, it did not function as a group until 1973

²³⁸ S. Weiss, Interview with author, 01.02.10. Furthermore, although other members contributed to the newsletters, Weiss was the principle author throughout the group's existence.

Information regarding the first 'executive group', which included Martin Stanley and James Fahy, appeared in *Co-optic Newsletter 1 (CNL)*, April 1973, p.1

²³⁹ S. Weiss, Interview with author, 01.02.10

the current of optimism, and energy that ran through its membership regarding photography's evolving profile as a more creative activity in Britain during this decade.

Co-optic's main aim was to produce a network of photographers with a geographically unlimited membership, and although most were London-based there was a significant percentage that lived not only beyond the Capital but also outside Britain.²⁴⁰ Consequently, most of their activities took place in London, including two group exhibitions organised by Godwin (to be discussed in due course). Periodically, this caused problems with regional members such as Daniel Meadows, based in Yorkshire who withdrew his membership due to the London-centric nature of the group, stating: '*subscription is now far in excess of the service the society provides...If I was a resident in London the situation might well be different...*'²⁴¹ Yet some events were organised regionally, such as Richard Wood's two-day seminar on '*Equivalence in Photography*', held in his home town of West Runton, Norfolk (4.05.74), attracting twenty-two members and the general public, whereas others were less successful, such as Graham Watt's seminar on '*Artistic Policy*', held in a venue at Bristol two months earlier, which only four people attended including the speaker.²⁴² On the other hand, the encouragement towards self-organisation meant that some members began breaking off to set up their own interest groups, as Weiss reported '*Larry Herman, Angela Phillips, Ron McCormick, Homer Sykes, Chris Davis, Nick Hedges...who meet regularly...are intending to organise their own group projects and activities...*'²⁴³

Co-optic was one of a number of independent developments set up to promote the growing potential for photography as an art form. Other initiatives created for the same purposes, or that expanded their remit to support photography included:

The records show that Weiss invested his own finance to support Co-optic, particularly during its first year: '*Co-optic's Finances*', *Bellows* 3, Jan/Feb '76, p.9. He also used his brother's more impressive business premises as an address (Pall Mall), also his wife, artist Liliane Lijn's studio in the City for various meetings and events; whilst most administrative costs were reclaimed, Weiss always remained the main financier of the group – *CNL11 Oct 74*, p.1

²⁴⁰ One undated membership list included addresses from Germany, Sri Lanka, Sweden and America. 'Correspondence file', Co-optic Archive

²⁴¹ Daniel Meadows in correspondence with Stephen Weiss, Co-optic Archive, 16.02.75

²⁴² *CNL 8, June 1974*, p.2.

²⁴³ *CNL6, Mar '74* no.2

Spectro Arts, Whitley Bay; the *Side Gallery*, Newcastle, *West Midlands Arts*, and the *Half-Moon Gallery* in London's East End. Weiss was highly ambitious for the success of the group, and set out to enlist many established photographers of the day such as Bill Brandt, Dorothy Bohm and Roger Mayne, along with other principle participants in the arts and education including: curator, Nick Serota; Barry Lane; and Bill Gaskin (first Course Leader at Trent Polytechnic); some did become members, whilst others offered their distant support on a friendly basis.²⁴⁴ At its peak, the membership numbered one hundred and twenty people, and the opening offer included an invitation to participate in one of Co-optic's most successful schemes: the ***Real Britain*** two-part edition of twenty-five photographic postcards. The images were democratically selected within the group, and one of the successful entries was an image by Godwin, and again, I will be returning to this project in greater detail.²⁴⁵

In the four full years that Co-optic was in existence, the newsletters were the main form of communication, and dissemination on a wide number of subjects to its membership. Generally sent out on a monthly basis, they covered administrative affairs, such as committee meetings and financial matters; group project updates and social events, and those of other outlets nationwide; technical information and suppliers; practical advice, such as 'exhibiting strategies', or 'sales techniques' for the ***Real Britain*** postcard project; and issued contact details for all members. The immense value of these documents is the historical evidence they provide on prevailing interests and interactions within and beyond national developments of the times. In the first case, Peter Baistow's role as Art Director at *New Society* magazine meant members were given an early opportunity to contribute to the journal, as Barry Lane noted '...he was using quite a lot of the photographers from Co-optic.'²⁴⁶ Interestingly, Godwin had already provided illustrations for a book published in

²⁴⁴ Nick Serota (Curator: *Museum of Modern Art*, Oxford), Dorothy Bohm (photographer and opened the book shop at the *Photographers' Gallery*), and Barry Lane (*Arts Council* Photography Officer) were all one-time members of Co-optic, whereas photographers: Bill Brandt and David Hurn (also the Course Leader at Newport University), and Bill Gaskin were not. 'Correspondence file', Co-optic Archive.

²⁴⁵ S. Weiss letter to the Arts Council, March 1977. This letter included a summary of the organisation's achievements during its existence, including membership figures. 'Correspondence file', Co-optic Archive.

²⁴⁶ B. Lane and S. Isherwood, Interview with author, 11.03.10

association with *New Society* entitled: *Stories from the Dole Queue* whilst pursuing a line of social documentary work via her connections with Euan Duff.²⁴⁷

In the second case, Peter Turner ran a series of seminars at his London home entitled: *'Looking at Photographs'* in which the group discussed the *'attitudes, photographs and influence of major figures in photography'* such as *'Diane Arbus, W. Eugene Smith, André Kertész, and Bill Brandt.'*²⁴⁸ As editor of *Creative Camera*, Turner was also able to encourage members to participate in new events, as they occurred, including the Curator, Jean-Claude Lemagny's 1974 visit to add contemporary British photographers to the *Collection* at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris; Godwin was one of a number of photographers who participated through Co-optic.²⁴⁹ Turner, like Weiss on other occasions, also used the newsletters to reproach members for not supporting these efforts, for example when only four people turned up for Lemagny's talk and slide presentation at the French Institute, Turner wrote of the embarrassment it caused adding: *'...I fear we have done little to enhance the reputation of Co-optic as a responsible and committed body of photographers.'*²⁵⁰ Thus from another perspective, the documentation of Co-optic's activities over time confirms established knowledge, that is, in any small or voluntary organisation the work will generally fall to a limited number of enthusiasts with an evangelising streak, or a vested interest.

The *'Camera Obscured?'* Seminars

The dearth of sponsorship or, institutional support for photography during the early 1970s meant that a slowly emerging network of groups and individuals depended more on each other for moral and physical support. Therefore, with the group's second exhibition: *'Friends'* having been shown at the Half-Moon Gallery, Co-optic began looking to its nearest neighbour for further interaction based on mutually beneficial reasons.²⁵¹ One of these events was the series of six seminars entitled: *'Camera Obscured? Perspectives on contemporary British Photography'* (1975),

²⁴⁷ T. Gould and J. Kenyon *Stories from the Dole Queue, Towards A New Society*, Photographs by Fay Godwin, Published by Maurice Temple-Smith Ltd, London, 1972

²⁴⁸ CNL9, July '74 pp.4-5

²⁴⁹ CNL8, Jun '74, p.1.

²⁵⁰ CNL9, July '74 p.6

²⁵¹ *'Friends'* was organised by Gerry Badger (Co-optic) and Paul Trevor (Half-Moon) at HMG (14.11–11.12.74). CNL 10, Sep '74, p.1. And *[Section]3 'The Half-Moon Gallery', CNL Part B, Dec '74, p.2*

(fig 62).²⁵² As the image of the poster indicates, this programme was aimed at provoking a wider debate on the creation of better opportunities for photographers, and enabling its broader application as a creative tool across the socio-cultural spectrum, rather than its being just a means to record data. Furthermore, the fourth seminar entitled: '*Women in Photography*', showed Godwin as one of fifteen '*Invited participant[s]*.' The *Co-optic Newsletter* reviewed each event commenting on the perceived successes and failures of this fledgling scheme, which in terms of the first: '*Young British Photographers*' had been the result of some considerable input by Co-optic members, not just as participants in the exhibition, but as publisher/distributors of the catalogue, an event that secured three article/reviews.²⁵³ Yet frustratingly for this thesis, and perhaps revealing of attitudes towards women at the time, the only seminar that was not reviewed in its newsletter was the fourth one.

A Profile of the membership

Co-optic predominantly attracted young male professionals, many of who had a technical or art school background. Yet although its number included a significant quota of photo-journalists, Weiss also encouraged keen amateurs. Godwin's way into the group came via her connections with Robert Golden. He declined to join on political grounds believing there to be a classist element in some British photography, stating in his opinion it showed '*middle class photographers looking down on the ridiculous antics of the working classes*', conversely Godwin was keen to join.²⁵⁴ Indeed her first letter to Weiss revealed a kind of '*crie de coeur*' in terms of her lack of self-confidence at this early point in her career. Despite her earlier involvement with Euan Duff and Golden, she clearly felt on less certain terrain in the company of other professionals, and her anxiety about dealing with a group of fellow photographers stood in sharp contrast to the self-assurance apparent in her relations with the literary/publishing world. In the same letter she included a list of concerns, together with an offer to help out, which was immediately countermanded by her time restrictions as a '*single mum*', on the other hand she was quite candid about her

²⁵² The *Co-optic* archive also contains a printed A4 sheet entitled: '*Half-Moon Gallery and Co-optic*', and probably formed part of the publicity campaign. It outlines their profiles, including past achievements, as well as their current intentions regarding the Seminars.

²⁵³ *CNLI10, Sep '74*, p.2

²⁵⁴ S. Weiss: undated note following his first meeting with Robert Golden and Fay Godwin, 14.03.73, 'Photographer's file', Co-optic Archive.

relative lack of experience admitting '*I feel totally isolated in my work.*'²⁵⁵ Although, perhaps the most significant factor was her awareness of the differing demographics in the group, which prompted her offer to '*withdraw*' on the grounds that '*all the others were so young.*'²⁵⁶

In a second example, it is possible to understand how the age factor signified with other mature photographers attempting to adapt to the changing dynamics in British photography at this time. That is, in a rather more sensitive exchange between Weiss and Roger Mayne, the latter described its detrimental effects on his '*personal position*', stating: '*I am an established photographer, middle-aged, Co-optic is mainly a group of young photographers. In the arts the generation gap is as little as five years...I am about three generations out of step.*'²⁵⁷ Mayne's comments were mainly concerned with the manner of the selection process for the postcard project – for which his work had not been chosen. Yet it would seem that his comments were not unfounded, as a subsequent discussion between Val Williams and Pete Turner revealed, regarding the rise of *Creative Camera* in the early '70s, he recalled: '*[The] older group of photo activists, that included Roger Mayne and Sir George Pollock, was excluded...They seemed irrelevant.*'²⁵⁸ Turner's comments underlined not just how this emerging movement was attracting a younger generation, but for the purposes of this thesis, they also demonstrated the many barriers, including: age, gender and experience that Godwin felt obliged to negotiate as she attempted to find her place in the developing community of photographers. Commenting on the gender bias in photography, as well as the general sexual discriminatory attitudes in Britain in the early '70s, Val Williams and Susan Bright recently observed: '*Women photographers found it equally difficult to penetrate the clubbish camaraderie of the independent movement of photographers emerging from the new polytechnics.*'²⁵⁹ However, Godwin's early decision not to fully engage with feminist issues in her photography had also prompted Williams to comment on her unusual approach,

²⁵⁵ F. Godwin letter to Weiss, 17.05.73, 'Photographer's file', Co-optic Archive

²⁵⁶ Ibid

²⁵⁷ R. Mayne to Weiss, 19.11.73, 'Photographers' file', Co-optic Archive

²⁵⁸ L. Heron and V. Williams (Eds.), '*Crowned with Thorns Creative Camera 1965-1978*', *Illuminations: Women Writing on Photography from the 1850s to the Present*, Duke University Press, 1996, p.228

²⁵⁹ V. Williams and S. Bright, '*The Urge to Document, 1970-1990*', *How We Are: Photographing Britain from the 1840s to the Present*, Tate Publishing, 2007, p.138

which neither connected to a woman's tradition, nor did it follow the traditional route via the '*confines of the editorial and commercial worlds*.'²⁶⁰ William's comments therefore draw attention, once again, to the somewhat hybrid nature of Godwin's photography.

Indeed, some clarification on the age issue can be found in the differences between Godwin and Mayne's reactions. That is, the concerns she expressed were also premised on a more pragmatic basis, which was her powerful drive to follow useful and workable opportunities in order to further her relatively new profession. Whereas Mayne's reaction was more connected to his sense of status and dignity as a long-established photographer under threat. In both cases, Weiss' responded with strong words of encouragement for them to stay in the group and share their knowledge, offering to discuss any further problems on the matter.²⁶¹ Yet as Mayne left and Godwin stayed, her earlier reservations soon disappeared. As various newsletters revealed she became noticeably more vocal, and active in the group's wide range of administrative concerns and events, including raising group finances and organising exhibitions.²⁶² She was quick to air her objections to uncredited work being used by different branches of publishing, and was clearly looking to mobilise support from the rest of the group on this issue.²⁶³ Godwin's early awareness of photographers' rights was commented on by one of her early editors, Christopher MacLehose who recalled being '*at the end of her blunt instrument*' regarding '*the insistence on her name, her byline, her credit, her copyright – all absolutely fair, and by now taken absolutely for granted. But in those days she was way ahead of the game*'.²⁶⁴ Initially, MacLehose had commissioned Godwin as an 'Illustrator' in '*Rebecca the Lurcher*' (1973), for which she had been paid a nominal fee, and which she strongly resented, he noted: '*every subsequent dealing was an act of vengeance...I became a sort of target for Fay, somebody who had to be broken down and re-educated and so on*'.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁰ V. Williams, *Women Photographers: The Other Observers 1900 To The Present*, p.10

V. Williams, '*Fay Godwin Obituary*', *The Independent*, 2.06.05

Some of Williams' comments were discussed previously in: G. Alexander, '*Crossing the Landscape: A journey from uncontested to contested space*' MA Dissertation, Sussex University, 2006, p.67

²⁶¹ S. Weiss letter to Godwin, 18.05.73, also to Roger Mayne: 22.11.73, 'Photographer's file', Co-optic Archive

²⁶² *Co-optic's AGM Report November 1974*, pp1-3

²⁶³ *CNL 6 Mar'74*, pp.3-4

²⁶⁴ C. MacLehose, Interview with author, 25.10.10

²⁶⁵ Ibid,

Exhibitions & General Participation

As mentioned earlier, members were encouraged to set up smaller group activities in their own locale such as seminars or exhibitions. Godwin, along with Gerry Badger organised two exhibitions of photographers working in Camden, and those living there, respectively. The first: '*Camden Photographers*' (July '75), was held at the Shaw Theatre, Euston Road. It also included her second assistant: Mike Abrahams, and Mike Goldwater, both of whom went on to become professional photo-journalists and founder members of the *Network* photographic agency (1981-2006).²⁶⁶ Most of the exhibition meetings took place at Godwin's home in Camden, where Abrahams recalled a lot of other social gatherings taking place, involving photography, and other aspects of the arts or media.²⁶⁷ This activity would have been very familiar territory for her, as it echoed the many meetings she had hosted at home for her husband during his Penguin years, attended by Dieter Pevsner who recalled: '*She was a very good hostess...after dinner everyone moved to another room and within a very short space of time Tony [Godwin] would fall asleep, and Fay would be left to hold the fort.*'²⁶⁸

A review of the first exhibition revealed how Godwin used this opportunity to show a range of her (yet to become) classic images: '*beach fishermen [at Dungeness]...a line of staring sheep, and the leaping lurcher dog.*'²⁶⁹ Conversely, the majority of the other seven contributors followed a more contemporary line by showing bleak portrayals of Britain, or street surrealism.²⁷⁰ In Neil Gulliver's review for Co-Optic's *Newsletter* he remarked on Godwin's stylistic strides forward in the landscape genre: '*21 outdoor scenes, mostly on the beaches of Sussex. Fine pictures, beautifully*

A. Simpson, *Rebecca the Lurcher*, Photographs by Fay Godwin, Barrie & Jenkins Ltd, 1973.

²⁶⁶ M. Abrahams, Interview with author, 17.08.11, Abrahams was Godwin's assistant from '72-6, and M. Goldwater Interview with author, 17.07.11. All three remained acquaintances and occasional workshop colleagues; Godwin also joined the *Network* agency in 1994 (approx), which represented her portrait photography.

²⁶⁷ M. Abrahams, Interview with author 17.08.11, Another former assistant, Peter Cattrell had similar memories of Godwin regularly entertaining authors, journalists and others for lunch, and how he was often invited to join in, he stated '*Fay had an enormous network, but would also ring up people endlessly to ask how to do different things*', P. Cattrell, Interview with author 24.11.10

²⁶⁸ D. Pevsner, Interview with author, 19.11.08, Pevsner was a former colleague of Tony Godwin's and subsequent first publisher to Fay Godwin.

²⁶⁹ L. Sagues, '*cheery to chilly and sad to surreal*', *Ham n'High*, June 1975, (np), 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

²⁷⁰ Ibid

*printed. One of few photographers with a true feeling for landscape.*²⁷¹ By this stage Godwin had published *The Ridgeway* to wide critical acclaim, although Gulliver's comments should perhaps also count as evidence of the progress made, and confidence acquired during the first two years of her membership in the group.

The second exhibition organised by Godwin and Badger entitled: '*Leisure in Camden*' (October '75) took place at Swiss Cottage Library.²⁷² The important point to bring in here is that Godwin had previously used this venue to hold her first solo exhibition for a six-week period (November '73/January '74). Primarily, the show had been founded on her images of a local community project: '*Noyes Fludde*' (1972), which recorded the various stages of its rehearsals – forty-five of which went on to feature in the programme.²⁷³ Once again Nina Kidron had recommended Godwin's services, and it also provided the first meeting with Ken Garland, whose significance I mentioned earlier.²⁷⁴ The venue also enabled Godwin to promote her skills and reputation by including fifty of her literary portraits, on the grounds of having '*too much space to fill...*' furthermore, she also used the opportunity '*to leave a folder of her landscapes...to avoid being typecast as a portrait photographer.*'²⁷⁵ This example presents more evidence of Godwin's strong resolve to promote her work as a photographer capable of working across the genres, as she also sought to establish the one that would bring her both success and personal fulfilment.

The *Real Britain* postcard project

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Co-optic's original scheme had been the production of the *Real Britain* postcards. Its function was essentially two-fold firstly, postcards presented a public platform for creative expression that could easily be disseminated to a wider audience.²⁷⁶ Secondly, for a self-funded group, they were

²⁷¹ N. Gulliver '*Reviews*', *CNL* (undated), *Summer '75*, p.2

²⁷² '*Camden Exhibitions*', *CNL12, Dec '74, Part B*, p.4

²⁷³ Programme details: *Noyes Fludde*, A Young Music Makers production of Benjamin Britten's opera, directed by Jonathan Miller, and performed at The Round House, London, 21-3.12.72

²⁷⁴ N. Kidron, Interview with author, 15.05.07

²⁷⁵ Unauthored, '*Writers Portraits/ Young Music Makers*', *Ham & High*, 1974, (np), 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

V. Cosstick, '*Camera Angles*', *Guardian Women*, 01.02.83, p.8(?), 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

²⁷⁶ Weiss made this point to most of the photographers he wrote to at the 'recruitment' stage, my example has been taken from his letter to Robert Golden, 08.03.73

relatively cheap to mass-produce, and the income from sales was intended to finance other publishing activities via a ready-made marketing system: *'The strength derived from having our own distribution network...is obvious...The channels could be used in the future...for more ambitious publications: books, catalogues, portfolios etc...'*²⁷⁷

However as printing considerations alone took more than a year to organise, the postcards were not finally ready until December 1974, some two years after the idea had been launched which were to have a number of consequences for its success.²⁷⁸

The twentieth century artist's postcard – a very humble descendant of portable art/souvenirs such as Renaissance miniatures, or Grand Tour acquisitions, was part of the resurgence in popularity for ephemera in the 1970s, typified by the success of Athena Posters from the mid-60s. The photographic community was swift to embrace the idea using it in a variety of ways throughout the decade. For example, in 1972 the Arts Council published the *'Two Views'* postcards (a series of fifty-four images) to accompany eight regional exhibitions, later brought together as a single show at the *Photographers' Gallery* in May/June, 1973; Barry Lane described it as: *'Part of using popular media of the time.'*²⁷⁹ Anthony Stokes extended their use at his gallery, he recalled: *'At Garage...we 'ran-on' exhibition invitation cards as postcards, i.e. we modified the printed side of the card to suit postcard format as a promotion device or to sell.'*²⁸⁰ Other correspondence from the Co-optic Archive showed how they were used in student assignments at Trent Polytechnic in 1973, and later in 1975 they were the media of choice for one of a number of regional group competitions including *West Midlands Arts*, which echoed some of Co-optic's aims: *'...to draw public attention to the art of photography and to provide an outlet for the work of talented photographers.'*²⁸¹ In Weiss' case he recalled being inspired by examples from Agathe Gaillard, in Paris, whose husband Photographer, Jean-Phillippe Charbonnier

²⁷⁷ *CNL9 July '74*, p.1

²⁷⁸ *Report of the Annual General Meeting, 02.11.74*, p.4 Also in *CNL.12, Dec.1974 Part B*, p.2

²⁷⁹ *'The work of modern British photographers presenting their views of British towns...Brighton, Bury St Edmunds, Poole, Oldham, Derby, Huddersfield, Kendal and Southend. The photographers...Christine Pearcey, Kevin Keegan, Colin Curwood, J.B.Harris, Ian Berry, Chris Killip and Ron McCormick', 'Two Views Postcards', Press Notice: Arts Council Publications about Photography, 1975(?)*, Co-optic Archive

Also, Author's email correspondence with Barry Lane, 10.03.11

²⁸⁰ A. Stokes, email correspondence with author, 31.01.11

²⁸¹ B. Gaskins, letter to Stephen Weiss, 09.04.73

Also, *'West Midlands Arts Postcards'*, in *CNL, April '75*, p.5

had recently exhibited at the *Photographers' Gallery* (July/August 72).²⁸² The following year, Weiss visited the couple in Paris in order to '*ask about her postcard operation*', and potential exhibition spaces for Co-optic's photographers, which found a favourable response, and it also showed evidence of relationships being built between the national and international communities of photographers.²⁸³

Despite the rising popularity of colour film in the 1970s, the ***Real Britain*** postcards showed a nation in black and white. The group's choice to print in monochrome was based on it being the preferred aesthetic of the period; that is its gritty realism separated personal from commercial work, or the family snap. The postcards were aimed at a more visually educated public: '*the growing number of people unimpressed by ordinary view cards, but who respond to new ideas and visual stimulation.*'²⁸⁴ Socio-cultural and economic changes in Britain, during the previous decade, meant there were increasing numbers of image-savvy, and politically aware people looking at the vocabulary of pictures, particularly students coming through the revised education system. Therefore Co-optic's claim for their photographers was that it offered a more 'authentic' representation of life in Britain: '*showing the whole range of life styles in this country*', and it set out to challenge '*the mediocrity...and low standard of existing view-cards*', in which contrived colour images linked them to the advertising industry and its fictile versions of reality.²⁸⁵ Thus images showing sanitised seaside towns, or iconic symbols of Metropolitan or urban life, were to be challenged by a series of scenes purporting to depict more credible, or creative versions of similar places.

However, the postponed publication date, and limited choice of subject matter meant that a large percentage of the images remained part of the same nostalgic or humorous projections of Britain. For example, Dennis Morris' '***Devon***', showed a clichéd shot of father and son in harmony, with their rolled up trousers dipping their toes in the sea, (fig 63), and Martin Parr's '***Blackpool, 1971***' portrayed a portly pair happily dozing amid rows of empty deckchairs, (fig 64), by manipulating aspects of the

²⁸² S. Weiss, Interview with author, 16.05.10

²⁸³ '*Exhibitions*', *CNL.3, 29.10.73*, p.1 Ultimately no exhibitions transpired.

²⁸⁴ ***Real Britain*** postcard sales leaflet, Co-optic Archive

²⁸⁵ S. Weiss, letter to Robert Golden, 08.03.73, 'Photographers file', and text from the ***Real Britain*** postcard sales leaflet, p.1, Co-optic Archive

classic 'humorous or saucy postcards' view of 'Britain-by the-Sea' (which also compared closely with Tony Ray-Jones image of '*Blackpool 1968*'). Others mirrored the dominant schools of style being taught in photographic courses, as noted by Helena Srakocic-Kovac (earlier), using the new language of American 'street photography' from the last fifty years; some of which had been re-directed via the legacy of Tony Ray-Jones whose '*Glyndebourne, 1967*' was included in the series, (fig 65). Hence the work of Joel Meyerowitz, a close colleague of Jones in New York, could be seen in Eric Carpenter's shadowy figure of a '*Woman in Car*', by echoing the former's cashier obscured by a window grille in '*Times Square, 1963*', (figs 66,67). Similarly, Gerry Badger's '*Camberwell 1969*' presented a British version of Walker Evans' street signs, such as '*White House Garage, New York about 1934*', (figs 68,69). And lastly, traces of European surrealism, the English tradition of *Picture Post*, or Humphrey Spender's work in *Mass Observation* appeared in Kenn Griffiths' eccentric character caught in a 'decisive moment' pose as a one-legged man in '*Enquiries*', and Phillip Warren's '*When I was a child*' harked back to Bill Brandt's '*Northumbrian Miner*' from 1937, (figs 70,71,72).

Criticism

Not everybody shared Co-optic's representation of Britain in the mid-70s, and criticism came from within the group. Interestingly it was one of the featured photographers, Daniel Meadows who commented on the narrowness and repetition of the subject matter by asking: '*Where are the chip shops and the Remembrance day services? There is more to us than Parks, old men, holiday camps, beaches (so many seaside shots!) and who is the Earls Court Queen?!*'²⁸⁶ Earlier that year, Co-optic members: David Kilpatrick and Bruce Rae had also complained about the narrow and dated selection of photographers, and their work, which had featured in the exhibition: *Ten From Co-optic* (Feb/Mar '74), with the former stating: '*I was disappointed to recognise every single name on the...list...I had hoped to come across new names and new styles...*'²⁸⁷ Weiss clearly recognised the charge as he responded:

²⁸⁶ D. Meadows, letter to Stephen Weiss, 10.11.74, 'Photographers file', Co-optic Archive

²⁸⁷ D. Kilpatrick, *CNL6, Mar '74*, p.4, '*Ten from Co-optic*' was quite successful touring four UK venues, including *MOMA* Oxford and the *Photographers' Gallery*, before moving on to Germany, and the photographers featured were: Neil Gulliver, Nick Hedges, Larry Herman, Martin Parr, Guy Ryecart, Dave Sample, Chris Steele-Perkins, Paddy Summerfield, Pete Turner and John Webb, five of whose work also appeared in the *RB* postcards

*‘Possibly our policy has been fairly conservative so far and perhaps it should be one of Co-optic’s objectives to bring out more experimental and unknown work, and as such pioneer photography.’*²⁸⁸ From the last comment in his reply, it is clear to see that Weiss still showed a strong measure of optimism for the group’s development at that time, and how he was ready to convert any perceived failures into an advantage.

Other criticism of the ‘new’ nature of photography came from the press. Euan Duff, photographic critic for *The Guardian* attacked the work produced by *Young British Photographers*, mostly members of *Co-optic*, six of who featured in the *Real Britain* postcards.²⁸⁹ Duff accused them of producing work ‘*in a vacuum, in which the only people likely to be interested in what they produce are other photographers*’ having already noted: ‘*they are self-deluding in regarding themselves as the vanguard of a new movement, when they are in fact, the rearguard of a tired old movement that reached its peak before many of them were born.*’²⁹⁰ He also aimed his comments at the Arts Council for ‘*encourag[ing] their delusions.*’²⁹¹ All of which revealed both aspects of his own attitude towards the role of the Photographic Sub-Committee, as well as some of the deepening divisions being established between different factions of the growing photographic community, where various groups and individuals were realising their own vision for its future – as a documentary, or artistic practice.

Duff’s beliefs had already been discussed in *Co-optic*’s review of the Half Moon Gallery’s second seminar, where it had been noted that he was ‘*opposed to developing the status of photographs as precious fine art objects.*’²⁹² This was described in stark contrast to another panel member’s opinion, Thomas Joshua Cooper who, like Godwin, was an early exhibitor in one of London’s avant-garde art galleries: Robert Self’s ‘*Situation*’, Covent Garden.²⁹³ Interestingly, Duff’s closing paragraph advocated the work of Godwin’s other early ‘advisor’, Robert Golden as

²⁸⁸ *CNL6* March ’74, p.4

²⁸⁹ ‘*Extract from The Guardian, Saturday July 12 1975*’, *CNL* (undated, presumed Summer’75)’, pp. 2-3. The six contributors to the *RB* postcards were: Homer Sykes, John Webb, John Wall, Paddy Summerfield, Paul Hill and Neil Gulliver, *RB Re-order Forms*

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 2-3

²⁹¹ *Ibid*

²⁹² R. Wood, ‘*Photography on the Curriculum*’ March 3rd, *CNL April* ’75, pp.1-2

²⁹³ *Ibid*

A. Stokes, Interview with author, 15.07.05. Stokes recalled Cooper’s work (*Images of Our Morality*, 1977) being exhibited at the same time he was promoting Godwin’s different projects at his Covent Garden Gallery: ‘*Anthony Stokes*’.

demonstrating a more pertinent line of communication with a wider audience.²⁹⁴ He wrote of Golden's collaborations with Sarah Cox on '*Farmworkers, Dockworkers, Carworkers, Mineworkers*', stating:

*The pictures are straightforward and excellent, showing clearly what is involved with the jobs but also demonstrating how effective photography can be when used unpretentiously to put over relevant subject matter to a general audience, albeit children. Arts Council please note.*²⁹⁵

The backward-looking tendencies of many of the *Real Britain* postcard images reflected a general struggle during the '70s to shrug off some of the country's prolonged post-war culture, and residue from its long period of austerity. The attempt to make the break between the past and the future was reflected in other area of visual media such as television for example BBC's comedy show '*The Likely Lads*', and its sequel '*Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads*' both exemplifying the slow pace of change in British society despite a desire to sever those ties.²⁹⁶ One image that managed to demonstrate the rupture was Sirkka-Liisa Konttinen's '*Girl on Bouncing Ball*' (1971), (fig.73). Here, she captured the mid-flight moment of a young girl, in a sparkling dress, bouncing away from the camera on a space-hopper, framed by archetypal back-to-back houses and cobbled streets of a typical northern working-class street. In her over-sized (adult's) dress, the picture of a girl playing ought to have epitomised the freedom of childhood and innocence. However, having no human face to engage with she becomes an enigmatic figure, calling to mind the young girl in De Chirico's '*Melancholy and Mystery of a Street*' (1914), (fig 74). Here, some of the same components – a child at play, an empty urban space, where unknown shadowy shapes or spaces conspire to induce an overwhelming sense of fear and uncertainty of what the future holds.

²⁹⁴ R. Golden & S. Cox, *People Working* Series (of 10), Kestrel Books (imprint of Penguin) 1975-8

²⁹⁵ 'Extract from *The Guardian*, Saturday July 12 1975', *CNL* (undated, presumed Summer '75)', pp.2-3.

²⁹⁶ '*The Likely Lads*' and its sequel '*Whatever Happened the Likely Lads*' broadcast between 1964-66, and 1973-74 respectively, on BBC1. British Comedy Guide:

http://www.comedy.co.uk/guide/tv/the_likely_lads/

http://www.comedy.co.uk/guide/tv/whatever_happened_likely_lads/

Konttinen's image was constructed to address contemporary social issues provoked by the redevelopment scheme in Byker, a condemned working-class suburb, built specifically for the now declining ship and steelworks industry in Tyneside.²⁹⁷ In order to retain the cohesion of the community, the work was carried out in phases.²⁹⁸ Konttinen, also a resident recorded events as they unfurled: '*When my house finally came down with a clean sweep of the swinging ball, I stood and watched gulping at a distance.*'²⁹⁹ Thus the image presented a metaphor of the wrecking ball imbued with the shiny, bouncing brashness of new ideas, and their unintended consequences of 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater'. It was a political comment, and protest, for the loss of livelihood, familiarity and personal history. In the book of her twelve-year project, Konttinen informed us: '*At the end of the carnage, part of the spirit of the place had gone, and less than one fifth of the original inhabitants remained.*'³⁰⁰

Another image that successfully captured the changing cultural values of the '70s was Bruce Rae's portrait entitled: '*Earls Court Queen*' (1973), (fig 75). It was a declaration of a status, rather than one of personal identity, with particular references to the shifting sexual politics of the era, via an emerging sub-culture of drag and drugs in the music, art and fashion scenes of London and New York. Glam rock was a reactionary stance against its predecessors from the '60s, as well as any remaining vestiges of conformity or straightness. Thus whereas the Kinks' lyrics in '*Lola*', (1971), revealed a mixture of revulsion, confusion and philosophical acceptance regarding an encounter with a transvestite, the lyrics and life-styles of artists like David Bowie and Lou Reed positively embraced the new 'gender-bending' experiments of self-re-invention. Rae's visit to Andy Warhol's Factory in New York, during the summer of '73, gave him first-hand experience of life in the fringes of the artist's circle, and his portraits of Warhol earned him a lot of kudos, as well as a new photographic direction upon his return to the vibrant social scene at the Royal College of Arts.³⁰¹ It was there he met fashion student Pete, the featured 'pearly queen' of

²⁹⁷ '*Moving In*', '*The Byker Estate, Newcastle, 1967 to the Present: Decline and Recovery*', *Future Communities*. <http://www.futurecommunities.net/case-studies/byker-estate-newcastle-1967-present>

²⁹⁸ *Text drawn from Amber Catalogue, 1987* <http://www.amber-online.com/archives/byker>

²⁹⁹ S-L. Konttinen, *Text drawn from Amber Catalogue, 1987*:
<http://www.amber-online.com/exhibitions/byker/detail>

³⁰⁰ Ibid

³⁰¹ B. Rae, Interview with author, 16.02.11

Earls Court.³⁰² Rae's use of shadow lent Hollywood drama to the image, rather than notions of secrecy, and the title referred to a growing celebration of camp in popular culture. The Lord Ranelagh pub in Earls Court, was located in an area steeped in gay and bohemian activity, it hosted the '*Queen of the Month*' contest in 1964, and provided one of many early prototypes for artist Andrew Logan, whose playful irreverence found favour with high profile figures in fashion and art. Logan's premiere of the '*Alternative Miss World*', in 1972, parodied its 'straight' counterpart by basing it on Crufts dog show. And David Hockney was one of the judges; the event was immortalised in the film about him called: '*A Bigger Splash*'.³⁰³

Chrysanthemums

Godwin's image entitled ***Chrysanthemums***, (1968/70), hailed from the '*Gospel Oak*' project mentioned earlier, (fig 76). It stood apart from the others in the series as unrepresentative of the new documentarists, and neither was it part of an emerging sub-culture, rather it drew on an older tradition of portraiture. Records show that it was one of four late considerations when the series expanded from twenty to twenty-five postcards, Weiss informed her: '*...we will do an edition of 25...the extra 2 will be chosen from 4 of which you are one...there is still a reasonable chance that your photograph will be included...*'³⁰⁴ The portrait shows an anonymous elderly woman sitting passively at a table bearing an arrangement of chrysanthemums and an ashtray. Concerned photography was very much the bedrock of social documentary at this time, and yet this composition enabled Godwin to aspire to something more imaginative than a straightforward welfare shot. By this I mean that her subject elicits an emotional yet somewhat detached response from the viewer, partly as one is unable to engage visually, or psychologically with the sitter, but also due to the ambiguous role of the objects on the table, which present a deliberate distraction.

Part of the answer might be sought by comparing Godwin's work with Robert Golden's '*Woman waits near window, Old People's Home, London*' (1971), (fig 77). Golden's image immediately conveyed the pathos of the subject to the viewer through the play on perspective and body language of his sitter. His picture suggested

³⁰² Ibid

³⁰³ My thanks to David Mellor for drawing my attention to the Andrew Logan reference.

³⁰⁴ S. Weiss, letter to Godwin, 12.11.73, 'Photographers file', Co-optic Archive.

firstly a strong sense of inefficacy at the end of a life, and secondly a resignation to waiting for death. The former having been symbolised by the woman's aproned figure – a poignant yet practically redundant garment, possibly worn out of habit rather than need, instead its pattern merged her with the wallpaper as if she were already part of a 'disappearing' process. Through the use of Golden's camera angle, this woman seemed further diminished by the big and impersonal surroundings of the state provided home, which conveyed an unequivocal message of the disenfranchisement of the elderly, reflecting the growing attitude and practice of modern Western societies' disintegration of the extended family. Whereas the latter interpretation of 'waiting' drew on an established model for both Godwin and Golden's images – the anticipation of the end in Henry Peach Robinson's '*Fading Away*' (1858), (fig 78). Here, as a young woman succumbed to TB, other figures in the room were already mourning her passing – dead whilst still alive. Their sense of hopelessness was also suggested by their body language, in particular the figure to the left of the frame, seated with her hands in her lap signalling the countdown of breath to zero.

Yet in spite of the many compositional and subject matter parallels between Godwin and Golden's images, her picture does not encourage a sentimental reading. Almost the contrary in fact, here the viewer had been given a more pragmatic, and mediated impression of this elderly woman's situation, which revealed something of the author's wider intentions. The title '*Chrysanthemums*', often shortened to 'mums' lent the sitter a more universal role as wife (her wedding ring), mother, grandmother, and through the solitary pose – widow. Her formal dress (including jewellery) and upright pose implied vitality, whilst the tightly crossed arms, although proposing a similar air of resignation to waiting, does not suggest the same sense of despondency as Golden's fading figure. Lastly, the profiled view whilst closing off direct visual engagement with the sitter, afforded her some anonymity and dignity without losing the poignancy of her situation.

The evidence of the contact sheets show how Godwin worked for this somewhat detached effect, (fig 79). They show that '*Chrysanthemums*' had been selected from twenty-four other shots taken in the same visit, and was part of a larger series of single elderly female sitters in the '*Gospel Oak*' file. This moves me to my next point

– Godwin’s aspirations to become a successful photographer. The example of Whistler’s *Mother* makes a useful comparison by showing how Godwin achieved the dual interpretation of intimacy, whilst maintaining a disinterested distance, (fig 80). Modern opinion has it that James McNeill Whistler’s *Arrangement in Grey and Black* (1871) was a combination of his Symboliste style, elevating ‘form’ and ‘decoration’ over narrative or subject – with the need to acknowledge the identity of his sitter. Dr Joanna Meacock, has noted that Whistler achieved a balance by compensating the attention and space he devoted to the decorative scheme, by ‘...conveying something of her strong Protestant character in the sombre pose, expression and colouring. [Also,] how sensitively [he] painted her face, lace cap, hands and handkerchief.’³⁰⁵ As I have shown, Godwin’s image employed formal visual language, which opened it to a more objective and aesthetic reading, allowing for a range of meanings, intentions and references to emerge. Lastly, the image was one of very few (from this sizeable file in her archive) that went on to be published, suggesting that she (as well as the democratic process that elected it as part of the *Real Britain* postcards) saw its potential as a commercial success, and this is a point I shall return to shortly.

The third point deals with Godwin’s decision to re-title the image and how that may help access some of her wider intentions. By changing it from the more prosaic heading of: ‘*Waiting for the Geriatric Visitor*’ to ‘*Chrysanthemums*’, suggests she saw the range of symbolic and literary associations it added to the image. That is the flower’s international connotations with long life, death and lamentation have obvious possibilities for the subject, some of which I have already discussed. From a literary perspective, it carried a raft of references, two being the celebrated short stories written by DH Lawrence and John Steinbeck: ‘*Odour of Chrysanthemums*’ (1909) and ‘*The Chrysanthemums*’ (1938) respectively. Both tales focussed on the stifled lives and/or aspirations of the female protagonists socially and economically fettered by their gender; the role of the flowers drew on their many symbolic properties. In this instance, they represented female endurance and sacrifice as subordinates to their husbands, and to the strictures of the patriarchal society from which they could not escape. Godwin’s image adds one final injustice to the lot of women – the subject of

³⁰⁵ J. Meacock, Centre for Whistler Studies / History of Art Department, University of Glasgow, <http://www.mr-whistlers-art.info/information/information.shtml>

female longevity. For many women born before the second-wave feminist era of the '70s, they spent a lifetime deferring to the patriarchal system, and statistically, they often found themselves nursing and surviving their partners, before going on to face an unknown future alone, often in the hands of the state such as Golden's portrait revealed. Thus, Godwin's image reflected aspects of a solitary/abandoned, yet resilient/defiant woman.

The value of this analysis has not been to construct a direct mirror-relationship between Godwin and the sitter. Rather, it has been to expand the portrait's visual vocabulary to see how it might fit the wider artistic/intellectual intentions of the author. The sensitive portrayal of her subject betrayed her genuine interest in the care of the elderly, as the sizeable *Gospel Oak* file reveals. In 2002 Godwin referred to her staunch support of the efforts by Camden's Social Services, at the time, to improve living and leisure activities for all of its vulnerable residents whilst she was working on the project, she noted: '*In those days it was a place I was proud to live in.*',³⁰⁶

It may be concluded that Co-optic was a temporary, but timely vehicle for Godwin, who despite initial reservations, went on to benefit from being part of such an ambitious photographic group at an early stage of her career. It placed her in the heart of a progressive movement, not only supplying her with new contacts, strategies and ideas, but enabling her to sharpen her profile as a serious-minded and dedicated operator in the budding years of photography's revitalised fortunes. Unfortunately neither Co-optic nor Godwin's archives have yielded any information thus far on her departure from the group. However, as her return to work in 1977 - following her illness, also overlapped with Co-optic's closure, it may well be that those circumstances moved her on. In this last discussion of chapter one, I have touched on some of the issues faced by one group of independent photographers attempting to raise their creative and professional profile in Britain during the 1970s. The criticisms levelled at them, both from within and outside the group, have revealed something of the deeply held convictions surrounding the changing perceptions of photography at this time. Fundamental transformations were taking place in terms of

³⁰⁶ Godwin discussed the '*Gospel Oak*' work on Charles Mapleston's, '*Don't Fence Me In: Fay Godwin's Photographic Journey*', DVD 26.01.13

the status of the medium, which produced some victors and many casualties, of which Co-optic was one of the latter. Yet despite its abrupt end, it succeeded in selling the first publication of ***Real Britain*** postcards within a year (50,000 cards in total), and even went into a re-print.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁷ Figures obtained in Documents from the Co-optic Archive, courtesy of Stephen Weiss

Chapter Two: ‘A Coming of Age’

*‘Know most of the rooms of thy native country before thou goest over the threshold thereof. Especially seeing England presents thee with so many observables.’*³⁰⁸

Our Forbidden Land (1990) was the third of the four books quoted by Roger Taylor that stood apart from the rest of Godwin’s publications.³⁰⁹ In terms of format and quality it was very similar to *Land* (1985), although her approach was very different for this project – a personal legacy, as it was intended to mark her term of Presidency of the *Ramblers’ Association* (1987-90).³¹⁰ On this occasion she did not work collaboratively, but conducted her own research and wrote the text herself. The resulting book was a hard-hitting polemical text about public access issues demonstrated through a wide range of abuse and misuse of Britain’s rural landscape. Here, she identified the main agencies she believed were responsible for not only reducing public enjoyment of the countryside, but also for degrading or destroying its fabric and the many different life-forms it supported. Those in her target range included: agribusiness, commercial forestry, the military, nuclear power sites, and mass-market tourism, the findings of which further increased her distrust of distant authority. It was accompanied, predominantly by images that made a direct point, rather than the subtle indications of a wounded nature that had been read into *Land*. Images such as ‘*River Bure, Great Yarmouth*’ (1989) with its more memorable caption of ‘*Danger Raw Sewage*’ were to leave little to the imagination in her readership, constituting a rupture with much of the work for which she had become well-known, (fig 81). Whereas others, such as the cover image: *Meall Mor* (1988), Glencoe (1988), offered a more familiar interpretation of the landscape by incorporating the manmade with the natural, creating an interesting dynamic between the two great forces. Yet for Godwin it also represented an unfavourable imbalance of the former over the latter, resulting in a despoiled landscape, (fig 82).

Godwin subsequently spoke of her ambivalence, and discomfort about moving out of her normal practice, in order to use didactic images and text together, having

³⁰⁸ T. Fuller, *Ch.IV – Of Travelling, The Holy State and the Profane State*, p.149, Biblio Bazar, 2008

³⁰⁹ R. Taylor, ‘*Topographer with Attitude*’, p.15

³¹⁰ F. Godwin, ‘*Introduction*’, *Our Forbidden Land*, Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1990 pp. 29-30

previously preferred to imply rather than impose her views through her work.³¹¹ And clearly one cannot discount a commercial consideration at work in her decision. However, she was also aware of it being the most effective way to deliver an unequivocal message about her shocking discoveries. Ken Garland recalled some of their discussions about how they might reduce the ‘*aggressive*’ approach whilst retaining a ‘*provocative*’ response from the reader.³¹² Thus a significant percentage of *Land*-like images, prose, and poetry were also employed as a deliberate foil, both as respite and a reminder of the less palatable alternatives featured.³¹³ Garland also suggested subtle devices such as offsetting the text where it needed to jar the eye in order to drive home a meaningful point, whilst not disturbing the images, which he protected by using a smaller font, and setting them inside wide bands of white space.³¹⁴ He explained that, ‘*we wanted people to go “whoops” when they looked at the images*’, for example in ‘*Warning, Newlyn, West Cornwall*’ (1989), where the obvious pun was the municipal public notice with its ‘bad news’ message almost comically sited beneath the ‘*Welcome to Cornwall*’ poster (fig 83).³¹⁵ And yet a more constructed intention was working within the poster’s imagery, where the tourist and advertising industries had packaged a consumers’ feast – a *real* flavour of Cornwall, one that you buy into, rather than protect; as Garland observed: ‘*this is a landscape – a pastie turned into a landscape!*’³¹⁶ Thus, Godwin’s characteristic treatment of the graphic properties of the scene, harmonising signage with the street furniture, ensured it worked on both an aesthetic and political level, as well as infusing it with a subtle form of wit.³¹⁷

This chapter continues to consider the developing status being forged by Godwin as a photographer-author of the landscape, as she built up to becoming an environmental campaigner. It begins by setting out the socio-political and cultural context that laid the foundations for her move. With no clear demarcation line between the work preceding this new phase, and to some point the colour work that followed, *The Saxon Shore Way* (1983) was the point at which many have perceived the change

³¹¹ J. Richards, ‘*Our Forbidden Land*’, *Portfolio*, No.9, Winter 1990, p.17

³¹² K. Garland, Interview with author, 14.08.08

³¹³ Ibid

³¹⁴ Ibid

³¹⁵ Ibid

³¹⁶ Ibid

³¹⁷ My thanks to Ken Garland for his insight on this particular image

occurred, including Godwin herself: '*where I've moved on is by showing some things that have spoilt the landscape, I haven't done it in an analytical way, it's rather like the land is under threat, and I think that is implied in my pictures...*'³¹⁸ The South East corner of Britain, an historically busy mix of marine/industrial, coastal and rural landscape, clearly lent itself to environmental investigation by being unavoidably more visually dingy than any of her previous landscape projects. In addition, her choice of co-author in that project, Alan Sillitoe, automatically suggests a more earthy, unsentimental tone for the text based on the novels for which he is best known: *Saturday Night*, *Sunday Morning* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distant Runner*, and the social realism genre from which they hail. Hence, Godwin's images showing the squalor of Estuary life, its factories, power stations and '*demented daubings...in such decaying areas*' are interspersed ironically with sanitised scenes of Dicken's Rochester, showing the scratched surfaces of a country in danger of going to the dogs.³¹⁹

From a personal perspective, although friends and colleagues do not remember Godwin for her party politics, she might be identified as a fellow traveller on the road that bore Left. A lack of political identity might partially be explained by her foreign background, that is not having lived permanently in the UK until her mid-late twenties. Former school-friend, Carlotta Hacker recalled, '*Politically, Fay was vaguely left-leaning rather than right, but her interests were in the arts, not politics.*'³²⁰ She also added that although Godwin probably participated in one or two Aldermaston Marches, and was '*very aware of the bomb*' she could not be described as a political activist.³²¹ Hacker's comments are very useful for forming an image of Godwin as the adolescent and young woman, adjusting to, and eventually settling down to life in Britain during the post-war years.

If Godwin's lack of a politically defined character was in evidence during her single years, she became more politically aware by her marriage to Tony Godwin (1961).

³¹⁸ C. Ford, Interviewing Fay Godwin, '*Every Bump is Suspect*', BBC Radio3, 1985, GFA

³¹⁹ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Ch.3, 'Medway to the Swale', Saxon Shore Way*, 1983, p.46

³²⁰ C. Hacker in correspondence with the Author, 18.03.13

³²¹ Ibid. Hacker and Godwin were fellow borders from 1945-7 at Luckley School for Girls, Berkshire, they later shared accommodation from 1954-8. Hacker's reference to the bomb alludes to Godwin's first-hand experience of several severe bombing raids as a child during the Second World War in Greece, 1941, and in London, 1944.

Her home in Camden from the late 50s to the mid-90s placed her in an intellectually fertile community, where her social interactions inspired a collaborative spirit that made self-feeding inevitable.³²² Although the couple were not actively involved with party politics, his work, and their social circle brought them into close contact with many politically pro-active figures and groups during their marriage, such as Michael and Nina Kidron (Pluto Press). Donald Simmonds recalled that '[Tony] *did have an influence on Fay politically.*'³²³ Also author, Jeremy Lewis described Tony Godwin as '*distinctively a man of the left...happy to use Penguin Specials as a branch of campaigning journalism.*'³²⁴ Lewis also noted Tony Godwin's admiration of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, at the time of its publication in 1962, together with his written stance against pollution in the environment, and the spread of nuclear and biological weapons.³²⁵ Her husband's support of these ecological issues would certainly have helped sharpen Godwin's awareness, and many of their new contacts led onto later opportunities for her both in publishing and photography. Finally, Euan Duff's recollection of Godwin's politics was of a Left '*or at least liberal*' persuasion.³²⁶ He also added:

*In the 1960s there was still a powerful constituency of progressive thought, the "army of the good", and I certainly counted her and Tony as part of it...it just fits with my sense of her as someone who would care and even campaign in a quiet and independent manner for such concerns.*³²⁷

Godwin's affinity with the natural world, nurtured from her childhood, manifested itself in different ways. She had been a member of *The Ramblers* from the mid-50s, and her great enjoyment of walking was another enthusiasm she shared with her husband; their excursions often involved family, friends and various work colleagues.

³²² Nina Kidron spoke of the high-profile names to be counted amongst Godwin's neighbours, and with whom she interacted on a domestic, social and professional level. For example, Pat Cohen, one of the co-founders of *Logica* commissioned her to do a series of images based on '*Manmade structures in the landscape*' for their annual review, 1978. Kidron and Dieter Pevsner also belonged to the same network of neighbours/friends/colleagues, and both emphasised its efficacy, particularly during the '60s/70s. N. Kidron Interview, 15.05.07 and D. Pevsner Interview, 20.11.08

³²³ D. Simmonds, Interview with Author, 14.11.06

³²⁴ J. Lewis, '*The Rise and Fall of Tony Godwin*', in A Penguin Special: *The Life and Times of Allen Lane*, Penguin/Viking, 2005, pp347-8

³²⁵ Ibid

³²⁶ E. Duff in correspondence with the Author, 19.03.13

³²⁷ Ibid

Fellow Penguin editor, Dieter Pevsner, spoke of many joint family walks taken in North London near their North London homes, and the publisher, Jill Norman, a former colleague of Tony Godwin's, recalled 'endless' country walks on the South Downs, whilst staying at their weekend cottage in West Sussex.³²⁸ Norman (amongst others) spoke of Godwin's photographic interest in landscape being in evidence at this early stage as she photographed their various group tours around the area stating: '[Fay] would be pushing all her photographic equipment in this huge antique pram...'³²⁹ These early memories of Godwin's strong commitment, and later conversion of her hobbies into a successful career as a landscape photographer-author, contributed to Norman's publishing *The Whisky Roads of Scotland* (1982) at Godwin's request.³³⁰

Derek Cooper was Godwin's personal choice of co-author for *Whiskey Roads*, a discerning choice based on his strong sense of familiarity and concern for the welfare of the region. She described how having read his book *Hebridean Connection* (1977) she knew 'he was the right person to work with.'³³¹ Of the many aspects that would have attracted Godwin's attention, one of the most compelling was Cooper's dismissal of a nostalgic approach, readily accepting the necessity of progress in a modern landscape by '...looking for a countryside that people live and work in, not the set-pieces trotted out for the coach party.'³³² Another incentive might well have been his decision to work with artist/photographer, Gus Wylie, whose work in the Hebrides had been pursued 'in the shadow of Paul Strand.'³³³ Although his images were reproduced in a conventional mode for illustrative/informational purposes, they also combined a creative/documentary intention, peppered with the dry/quirky humour that began to catch Godwin's eye from the 1980s onwards. For example the perfunctory 'Keep Out' sign in '*Elgol, Skye*' (1972-6), risibly sited in a remote spot had strong parallels with Godwin's later image: '*Brassington, Derbyshire*' (1989), (figs 84, 85). Here, the '*Private Land*' sign that banned a long list of anticipated

³²⁸ J. Norman, Interview with author, 27.01.09

³²⁹ Ibid

³³⁰ Ibid

³³¹ Unauthored, '*Fay's Dram*', *Amateur Photographer*, W/e August 28, 1982, p.104, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

³³² D. Cooper, *Hebridean Connection*, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1977, p.156

³³³ T. Chrichton, '*Last Glimpse of a Disappearing World*', *The Sunday Herald*, 11.12.05, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

pursuits was satirised by the appearance of a single sheep peering over the wall, suggesting a woolly reinforcement agent for an equally woolly message. Additionally, Wylie's image of a caravan '**Rainbow Boutique**' abandoned for the winter months is framed irreverently obscuring the tourist's view of the mountain range: *Beinn na Caillich*, '**Broadford, Skye**' (1972-6), (fig 86). This picture instantly recalls Godwin's somewhat profane image of Caravans obscuring the ancient ruins of '**Reculver Abbey**' (1981), (fig 87).

In *The Whisky Roads of Scotland*, Cooper's expertise as a food and wine journalist meant his primary focus was the routes and events of the illicit whisky trade over a period of three hundred centuries. Yet, he still managed to interweave Scotland's longer history of land and people mistreatment by the powerful few, from the destruction of the Caledonian Forest through to the Clearances, where Cooper reminded the reader: '*As you walk the empty glens and straths or wander along the old overgrown whisky roads, it is right to remember why they are so empty.*'³³⁴ In between tales of canny natives outwitting the English revenue men, he drew attention to the impact of modern day tourism on the country in terms of the commodification of its natural resources, from private game reserves to ski resorts, noting how these environmental incursions were only tempered by the extremes of weather rather than by human recognition of the finite properties of the land.³³⁵ All of these subjects: deforestation, selfish landowners and theme-park tourism were later investigated by Godwin in *Our Forbidden Land* at the end of the decade, showing again, how previous experiences armed her own stance in the environmental cause.³³⁶

From Godwin's perspective, *The Whisky Roads of Scotland* proved a less satisfying experience than she anticipated, as it subordinated her role as visual co-author.³³⁷ That is, despite having had a decisive say in the image/text layout, she spoke of her pictures being generally constrained by the geography of the agreed subject matter – of which Cooper displayed a scholarly knowledge: '*...so in a sense, I had to use them*

³³⁴ D. Cooper and F. Godwin, *The Whisky Roads of Scotland*, Jill Norman and Hobhouse Ltd. p.53. Environmental issues are embedded in Chapters 4 & 8

³³⁵ Ibid. pp. 129-131

³³⁶ Godwin quoted Cooper on aspects of biodynamic and organic farming over 'conventional agribusiness' in *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.170-1

³³⁷ Godwin's discussion of the pre-press process in, (Unauthored), '*Fay's Dram*', *Amateur Photographer*, W/e August 28, 1982, p.108, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

as illustrations – a word I detest.’³³⁸ Furthermore Cooper’s extended captions tended to detract from her more lyrical representations of the landscape, with their harsh factual evidence of environmental destruction. Two examples are his description of *‘Mount Keen and Glen Tanar’* (1980), with its *‘...raw and deplorable landrover tracks scarring the hill’*, and *‘Glen Tanar’* (1980) denuded of its fir forest by nineteenth century landowners, (figs 88,89).³³⁹ On the other hand, evidence of her own interests emerged quite subtly, such as her focus on manual labour seen through a range of heroic figures. In *‘The new still room at Macallan, Craigellachie’* (1980), the worker recalled aspects of Dickens’ introduction to *‘Coketown’* in *Hard Times* *‘...where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness.’* (fig 90).³⁴⁰ Her portrayal of hard graft is further underscored by the bent backs of a *‘Shepherd laundering a sheep, Glenlivet Burn’* (1980), as well as the industrious artisans at *‘Willie Taylor’s cooperage’* (1980), (figs 91,92). However, the most poignant reference to Scotland’s dirge was the absent child-worker in *‘Fasque House Fettercairn’* (1980), which highlighted the harsh conditions – at every level, endured by the workers in earlier times (fig 93). Here, Godwin’s image showed the cumbersome accoutrements of the laundry room from the eye level of a small person. The tale had been announced by Cooper’s story of a young girl in-service en route to work found frozen to death in the snow, it was then localised to Fasque House by the memories of a retired servant, who as a thirteen-year old recalled the *‘grim legend’* in the kitchen, *‘After work play. After play work.’*³⁴¹ Undoubtedly, this would have struck a chord with Godwin, who as mentioned in chapter one, had been brought up by a Presbyterian mother to observe a similar work ethic.

Godwin’s turn to environmental campaigning took a similar route to the one she had created and developed in becoming a photographer. That is, she allied herself with different individuals and ‘green’ groups, before settling with the one she felt suited her career needs as well as her personal beliefs. Over the previous decade, she had carefully built up her career by choosing to avoid overt political involvement through statements or allegiances, in the same direct manner chosen by many of her younger

³³⁸ Ibid, pp.108

³³⁹ D. Cooper and F. Godwin, ‘Caption’, *Whisky Roads of Scotland*, p.18

³⁴⁰ C. Dickens, *Hard Times*, Wordsworth Classics, 1995, p.18

³⁴¹ D. Cooper and F. Godwin, *Whisky Roads of Scotland*, p.134

contemporaries working in the documentary mode. Therefore, it is perhaps less surprising that she showed caution before attaching herself more openly to a cause she was comfortable to defend.

From a general perspective, the rise of environmentalism in Britain during the 1970s represented one of many key stages in an ongoing, multi-pronged, trans-global and historical process. The word ‘environmental’ is both an umbrella term and a relatively recent concept. It has been popularly used to describe the different movements that sprang up from the 1970s onwards, replacing the word ‘ecology’ and prior to that ‘conservation’.³⁴² During the ‘60s and early ‘70s the ecology movement was concerned with far more than the condition of the natural world in terms of human interventions. It demanded a complete re-think at every level of human life, from its practical economic/industrial/commercial structures to those of the spiritual realms, in order to re-set the balance between the finite resources of the planet, and man’s place within it.³⁴³ Thus, environmentalism covers a wide range of different organisations, often with overlapping histories, shaped by particular or shared socio-cultural and economic events. It is a subject that is continuously being reappraised according to the particular focus of research, with its attendant politics, introducing new, or re-presenting known evidence. For the sake of clarity, I will be using this term. Therefore, in order to give a context to Godwin’s turn to environmental activity during the 1980s, it is worth investigating the significant factors that led to some of her choices in turning her camera into a campaigning tool for *The Ramblers*.

Three Part History of Environmental Movements in the UK

Part One: from the modern era to WW1

In this section, I will be adopting the three-part schema developed by Christopher Rootes to trace the development of environmental movements. His tripartite sequence of the rise of recognisable environmental movements in Britain involves an ‘ebb and flow’ historical progression allowing for the disruption of war and the effects of

³⁴² H. Herring, ‘*The Conservation Society: Harbinger of the 1970s Environment Movement in the UK*’ *Environment and History*, Volume 7, Number 4, 1 November 2001, pp. 381-401, p.395.

³⁴³ For a more thorough discussion regarding terminology of the era, see: Meredith Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p205-6, and/or Neil Carter’s, ‘Introduction’ in *The Politics of Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp.2-11

economic slumps.³⁴⁴ These comprise of the modern era leading up to the First World War, the inter-war years, and the post-war years. In the first phase, Rootes identified the many philanthropic societies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which were mainly concerned with preservation and conservation of land and the wildlife it supported.³⁴⁵ These elite groupings grew out of the scientific knowledge that began with the Enlightenment period, yet were also tempered by the pervasive reactions of the Romantic era, specifically the detrimental effects of the Industrial Revolution on the land and its inhabitants. According to Rootes, the Victorian conservation groups such as the *RSPB*, the *National Trust*, the *Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts* and the *Commons Preservation Society (Open Spaces Society)* managed to survive till today (where many others didn't), by being grounded in the two fundamental ingredients of natural history and human welfare:

*These early organizations were not only concerned with the preservation of wilderness for its own sake, or the conservation of natural resources for future use. A number of them were also concerned with human well-being and sometimes with the built as well as the natural environment.*³⁴⁶

The ongoing legacy of Romanticism

Current academic research dealing with aspects of environmental history, has acknowledged the ongoing legacy of the Romantic era for its positive and negative effects, (a point I will return to later in this chapter). Here something resembling a villains and heroes gallery has been established, with authors apportioning blame and celebration to specific figures from the Enlightenment and Romantic movements respectively.³⁴⁷ From the former era, the names of Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon and

³⁴⁴ C. Rootes, '*Nature Protection Organizations in England*', Centre for the Study of Social and Political Movements, School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research University of Kent at Canterbury, pp1-3 <http://www.kent.ac.uk/sspsr/staff/academic/rootes.html>

³⁴⁵ Ibid, also see C. Rootes, '*1968 and the Environmental Movement in Europe*', p1

³⁴⁶ C. Rootes, '*1968 and the Environmental Movement in Europe*', p1

³⁴⁷ Jan Oosthoek has pointed to the problems of oversimplification with the vilifying of historical figures by stating, '*It is very fashionable within environmentalist and conservationist cycles to regard Descartes and Bacon as villains who are guilty of degrading nature from a living organism into a dead mechanism that can be manipulated at will. But this judgement is possibly too simple. In his introduction to Bacon's New Atlantis Weinberger notes that Bacon knew that the scientific transformation of the world would have extraordinary moral and political consequences and that it would pose new problems in place of old ones*', K. J. W. Oosthoek, '*The philosophical approach: green history*', in '*Environmental History - Between Science and Philosophy*', <http://www.eh-resources.org/philosophy.html>

Rene Descartes are regularly cited as being key figures in reconceptualising the role of nature from that of a divine gift and living entity, to one of material resource or as a commodity to be used by man with impunity, thus creating a sanction for mechanising society and its environs.³⁴⁸

Within the latter era, the names of John Ruskin and William Morris are among the most widely quoted for their written and physical works as examples of presenting an early environmental awareness. In Ruskin's case, these works included '*The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*' (1884) for his observations of the effects of industrial pollution as part of the perceived changes in weather patterns, in which he concluded: '*the Empire of England, on which formerly the sun never set, has become one on which he never rises.*'³⁴⁹ Also, he wrote a series of essays on the *laissez-faire* political economy of the period, '*Unto this Last*' (1862). Here, whilst advocating a political system that operated through co-operation rather than competition, he also promoted a healthy respect for the natural environment as a firm basis from which to progress.³⁵⁰ His reasons were not only for a considered proportion of material return in terms of '*food and mechanical power*', but also for nature's value as '*an object of sight and thought, producing intellectual power*', thus rendering it '*under man's affectionate protection...the most precious "property" that human beings can possess.*'³⁵¹ Additionally, there appeared an irresistible parallel with the title and message of Rachel Carson's publication: '*Silent Spring*' (1962), where Ruskin stated: '*No air is sweet that is silent; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under*

³⁴⁸ See Dick Richardson's discussion of how the growth of anthropocentrism: '*Follow[ed]the teachings of Bacon, Newton and Descartes, explanations of life are reduced to the material...*'

D. Richardson, '*Anthropocentricity, Biocentricity and Sustainable Development*', in *The Politics of Sustainable Development: Theory, Policy and Practice within the European Union*, ed. By S. Baker, et al., Routledge, 1997, pp.44-5

³⁴⁹ J. Ruskin, Lecture 1(of 2), '*The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*', Delivered at the London Institution, 04 & 11.02.1884, The Project Gutenberg eBook #20204, pp.21 & 30
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/20204/20204-h/20204-h.htm#Page_1

³⁵⁰ The main thrust of Ruskin's argument in '*Unto this Last*' according to George P. Landowe, was that '*one cannot formulate a useful economic theory without paying attention to the social affections*' which included '*ensur[ing] all people on all economic levels could obtain pure, unadulterated food and other necessities*', which strongly implied a healthy, balanced environment. Landowe George P., *Ruskin, 'A Victorian Web book, Chapter 3: Ruskin the interpreter of society'*, (np)
<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/pm/3.html>

³⁵¹ J. Ruskin, '*ESSAY IV, AD VALOREM*' in '*Unto This Last and Other Essays on Political Economy*', contributed to '*Fraser's Magazine*' in 1862 and 1863, being a sequel to papers which appeared in the '*Cornhill Magazine*', under the title of '*Unto This Last*', London: Ward, Lock & Co. Ltd, 1912, The Project Gutenberg eBook #36541, pp.216-7
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/36541/36541-h/36541-h.htm#Page_117

*sound—triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned words of men, and wayward trebles of childhood.’*³⁵²

Ruskin’s work had a profound influence on William Morris. The two men were fierce and tireless critics on the negative effects of industrialisation on the land, as well as its workforce, and both campaigned for alternative production methods based on models from a pre-industrial era. They believed the way forward was through a reintegration with nature as a form of spiritual nourishment, as well as a return to cottage industry. Whereas Ruskin’s founding of ‘*The Guild of St George*’ (1878) was a more localised attempt to put into action his utopian ideas about communal life and participation, Morris went on to make an international impact through his founding of the Arts & Crafts Movement. Furthermore, unlike Ruskin, he embraced the rise of Socialism and worked towards an egalitarian society. In his utopian vision of the future, ‘*News From Nowhere*’ (1890), he conceived of a happier, cleaner and most importantly classless population living in an Eden-like Britain, devoid of heavy industry. His time-travelling hero, William Guest upon arriving in the twenty-first century almost immediately noted the absence of ‘*The soap-works with their smoke-vomiting chimneys*’ whilst recovering from the incredible fact that salmon fishing was common practice in the Thames.³⁵³ My intention here has not been to trivialise Morris’ hopes for Britain, rather to demonstrate that his bounteous version of the river would have made a striking contrast to a contemporary audience, more familiar with the nocturnal fishermen of Dickens’ *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-5) – whose target catches were the putrid corpses of murder victims tossed into the Thames, together with the rest of societies’ unwanted outpourings, culminating in ‘The Great Stink’ of 1858.

Part Two: The Inter-War Years

During the inter-war phase, Rootes stated that new groups began to emerge with both a broader range of membership, and a wider political agenda of conservation.³⁵⁴ That

³⁵² Ibid, p.201

³⁵³ W. Morris, Chapter 2, ‘*A Morning Bath*’ *News from Nowhere, or An Epoch of Rest, being some chapters from A Utopian Romance*, Transcribed from the 1908 Longmans, Green, and Co. edition by David Price, email ccx074@pglaf.org, p.5

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1451706&pageno=5

³⁵⁴ C. Rootes, ‘*Nature Protection Organizations in England*’, p.4

is, although these new groups were still mainly propelled or supported by a socially elite source, a growing urban, middle and working class population seeking access to the countryside, prompted national calls to protect it, whilst it was still being promoted as a source of general enjoyment, especially through the rise of leisure pursuits.³⁵⁵ It is in this era that both the Council for the Preservation of Rural England – CPRE (1926) and The Ramblers Association (1935) were formed, and with which Godwin actively campaigned during the 1980s. Although both supported rural interests, the former was set up to protect by limiting access, and consisted largely of people with vested interests in rural Britain.³⁵⁶ Whilst the latter was organised to keep access to the public open, and as Philip Lowe and Jane Goyder's research has shown '*[it brought] the first influx of lower-class support into the movement.*'³⁵⁷ It is therefore unsurprising that for a variety of reasons that will be discussed later on in this chapter, that Godwin's experience with both groups was quite different. Regarding the former, she described it to one person as being '*one of the most unpleasant experiences of my life*', and when made President of the latter, she wrote of its being '*an honour...and...a privilege*'.³⁵⁸

Public access to the countryside for the pursuit of physical exercise had been long advocated, based on its perceived holistic value through the reconnection with nature. As stated earlier, it was first championed by individuals within the Romantic movement, followed by various groups affiliated to, or as part of Utopian socialism, and on a more permanent basis, by those involved with the garden-city enterprises.³⁵⁹ From the late nineteenth century, one agent of change who had a profound influence on other important figures and movements was Edward Carpenter and his community in Millthorpe, near Sheffield. There, as Dennis Hardy observed '*they worked the land, made sandals, and read Thoreau and Emerson*', initiating other '*settlement[s]*

³⁵⁵ Ibid

³⁵⁶ P. Lowe et al., *Professionals and Volunteers in the Environmental Process*, Report, 2001, p.6, <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/afrd/research/publication/55326>

³⁵⁷ P. Lowe and J. Goyder '*The roots of Environmental concern*', *Environmental Groups in Politics*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1983, p.23

³⁵⁸ F. Godwin, letter to Prue Cooper 10.12.94, declining her offer of a 'gift' life membership with CPRE, 'Consignment File', FGA, BL

F. Godwin, '*Introduction*', *Our Forbidden Land*, p.27

³⁵⁹ P. Lowe and J. Goyder, '*The Underlying Values of Environmentalism*', *Environmental Groups in Politics*, pp.19-20

...belong[ing] both to 'back to the land' and 'return to Nature' traditions.'³⁶⁰ Part of that pattern of development, as the author Paul Delaney has related was on Rupert Brooke's circle: *The Neo-pagans* noting: 'If Whitman was [its] spiritual grandfather, its godfather was Edward Carpenter, with his gospel of nudity, sunbathing and sandals.'³⁶¹ Delaney's work set out the wider and deeper impact of Carpenter's philosophy of the simple life that sprang from individuals with radically new attitudes towards education in Britain, in particular, J.H. Badley's new school *Bedales* with its progressive, co-educational approach and experimental syllabus.³⁶² There, Carpenter's agrarian idealism structured the physical and philosophical life of its pupils – essentially a Spartan regime, with the intention of sharpening their mental agility as well as their bodily discipline.³⁶³ It affected all aspects of daily life: from their stout tweed clothing and the ubiquitous sandals, the vegetarian diet, through to the physical work and leisure activities, all of which was located outdoors, either working the land, swimming in rivers (nude, but not mixed), and walking and climbing for pleasure.³⁶⁴ The school's reputation for attracting the children of '*the bohemian fringe and the upper middle classes*' became successfully established from its earliest days.³⁶⁵ Given Godwin and Hughes pre-dispositions towards alternative and self-disciplined regimes, it was unsurprising to learn that she investigated Bedales for one of her children – based on its encouragement of the arts and outdoor activities, or that she discussed the matter with Ted Hughes' (whose children were also schooled there) in the late '70s.³⁶⁶

On a wider scale, other mainstream socialist activities were promoted to a national working class audience in journals like Robert Blatchford's '*The Clarion*'. This included '*cycling club and land colonies, camping weekends and nature rambles, folk art revivals and open space campaigns*.'³⁶⁷ The open-air movement of the 1920s and 30s continued the trend for encouraging the population to spend time in an outdoor

³⁶⁰ D. Hardy, *Utopian England: Community Experiments 1900-1945*, E&FN Spon, 2000, p206-7

³⁶¹ P. Delaney, Part One Assembling, III, '*Neo Pagans*', *The Neo-pagans*, Macmillan London, 1987, p.39

³⁶² Ibid, I '*Rugby, Bedales and Cambridge*', pp.9-17

³⁶³ Ibid, pp.9-17

³⁶⁴ Ibid, pp.9-17

³⁶⁵ Ibid, 1987, p.14

³⁶⁶ F. Godwin, letter to Ted Hughes, 5.08.77, and T. Hughes, letter to F. Godwin, 9.08.77, 'Literary Correspondence' file, FGA, BL

³⁶⁷ D. Hardy, *Utopian England: Community Experiments 1900-1945*, E&FN Spon, 2000, p206-7

environment whether it was in pursuit (or a combination) of health, leisure or education.³⁶⁸ Also the growing infrastructure of road and rail enabled more of the population to travel on family holidays, and as Stefan Szczelkun's research has shown the '*Holidays With Pay Act of 1938...gave nearly 11 million people holiday pay for the first time.*'³⁶⁹ David Hey's discussion of Kinder Scout noted that cheaper fares also widened the opportunities for group walking in the countryside, and that '*Rambling became a mass activity encouraged by such bodies as the Holiday Fellowship, the Co-operative Holiday's Association and the Youth Hostel Association.*'³⁷⁰

Hence the Kinder Scout Mass Trespass (1932) was one of the most widely reported public responses to the denial of access to the countryside. In an act of early 'direct action' a group of several hundred men, and '*a few young women...kept to the rear in case violence broke out*' carried out an illegal ramble in the Peak District, Derbyshire.³⁷¹ According to Hey, objections voiced by unlawful activity in this region became locally publicised from the mid-1900s, and grew louder as game reserves became a more serious business towards the end of the nineteenth century.³⁷² Hey's account was primarily concerned with debunking the later mythologising of Kinder Scout, yet the media coverage it received registered a critical juncture in terms of public access rights, many of which had been removed during the five hundred years of the Enclosure Acts:

*Before the trial the trespassers had not received much public support...The turning point came with widespread disgust at the harsh sentences, which were out of all proportion to the crimes...[they] received national publicity, nearly all of it hostile...[I]n 2002, the eleventh Duke of Devonshire (1920–2004) said that the decision to prosecute 'was a great shaming on my family and the sentences handed out were harsh.'*³⁷³

³⁶⁸ P. Lowe and J. Goyder '*The Environmental Movement*', *Environmental Groups in Politics*, p.23

³⁶⁹ Szczelkun Stefan, Ch.5 '*Repression*', '*The Conspiracy of Good Taste*', Working Press, 1993, (np) <http://www.stefan-szczelkun.org.uk/taste/CGTindex.html>

³⁷⁰ D. Hey, '*Kinder Scout and the legend of the Mass Trespass*', *Agricultural History Review*, Volume 59, No.2, December 2011 pp.207-8

³⁷¹ Ibid, p.210

³⁷² Ibid, p.201

³⁷³ Ibid, p.199, & p.210-12,

Kinder Scout became highly symbolic for the Ramblers Association, particularly from the mid-1980s, when mass trespassing was revived as part of their '*Forbidden Britain*' campaign.³⁷⁴ '*The right to roam*' became one of its defining slogans, and Godwin played an active part in their events from this point onwards, particularly during her term as President (1987-90).³⁷⁵ Peter Melchett noted '*she was a frequent and unrepentant trespasser*', and that her image of the small '*Private*' sign in '*The Duke of Westminster's Estate: The Forest of Bowland*' (1989) epitomised the arrogance and selfishness of landowners: '*this extraordinary miniscule notice in what looks like a thousand square miles...*' (fig 94).³⁷⁶ Probably of all Godwin's 'keep out' images this was the most potent, and might be compared with Cartier Bresson's '*Volcano of Popocatepetl, Mexico, 1964*' for its understated efficacy, and for the drama these similar formats, but different stories represented (fig 95). In his image, death in a threatened landscape caused by natural catastrophe is made more poignant by the collapsing cross on a solitary grave. A sense of anxiety has been induced by its angle following the same path as the smoke drifting in from the left of the frame, like a grim sign predicting further loss of life to come. Similarly, in Godwin's image, the cross-like sign signified a commemorative message for the killing fields of one of Britain's bloodsports. Yet in retrospect, one might also say that it pre-figured the end of an era of covetous behaviour by the privileged few, by simultaneously delivering an early strike for the right to roam, when its victory became enshrined in the '*Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000*'. For as Andrew Bibby reported '*Bowland was the example held up above all others...[and] the great, elusive prize for which access rights were being demanded.*'³⁷⁷

England and the Octopus

As mentioned earlier, one of the most effective organisations attempting to establish controls on access and change was CPRE (1926). Unlike the all-inclusive landscape envisaged by Morris, Carpenter, Blatchford et al, this group employed a deeply conservative attitude towards maintaining a hierarchical structure of ownership and

³⁷⁴ P. Melchett, Interview with author, 15.12.10

³⁷⁵ Information taken from TV footage, showing Godwin's participation in the '*Annual Forbidden Britain Day*', featured on *Countryfile*, Pebblemill Production, BBC1, 16.09.90, GFA

³⁷⁶ P. Melchett speaking at Godwin's Memorial, British Library, 16.07.05, (DVD) Mapleston Charles/Malachite Film Co.

³⁷⁷ A. Bibby, *Forest of Bowland with Pendle Hill and the West Pennine Moors*, Frances Lincoln, 2005, p.18

admission. One of its founding oppositions was towards the increased system of arterial roads, accompanied by housing, and businesses encroaching on previously unspoiled countryside around London's suburbs. To this end they were largely successful, for as Christopher Rootes noted, '*CPRE's impact was immediate; its pressure for universal rural planning resulted in the Town and Country Planning Act 1932 and the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act 1935.*'³⁷⁸ Architect, Clough Williams-Ellis, one of its earliest proponents proved a fairly contradictory figure in terms of combining his progressive outlook for urban and rural design, with his orthodox values of what was aesthetically acceptable, and many of the latter were unleashed with ferocity in his book *England and the Octopus* (1928). As Peter Mandler has described, '*he replicated the late Victorian polarization of town and country...*' and whilst on the one hand '*...could barely contain his contempt for the silent (urban) majority, "the unburied dead",*' on the other hand, '*he made an extraordinary effort to proselytize among them.*'³⁷⁹ Williams-Ellis' book was one of the first to show a landscape disfigured by consumer leisure-mobility, and his argument was neatly summarised in the two images that appeared in the front, with their biting captions, showing the speed and spread of devastation visited upon the country during the returning hero's absence, (figs 96,97).

England and the Octopus was written as a kind of treatise for CPRE, in which William-Ellis demanded *authority* for the group's '*special missionary...like the League of Nations to carry out its beneficent mission.*'³⁸⁰ As a protest book it was concerned with the domestic situation, and despite the sixty-year gap, there are some compelling parallels to be found with the issues discussed, and shown in Godwin's *Our Forbidden Land*. Firstly, through both authors' constructive approach, which meant rather than simply present a relentless attack, their work included potential solutions to some of the problems cited, or support for schemes already in place. In the latter case, Godwin encouraged the wider environmental education of children,

³⁷⁸ C. Rootes, '*Nature Protection Organizations in England*', p.4

³⁷⁹ P. Mandler, '*Politics and the English Landscape since the First World War*' *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 3, Symposium: "*An English Arcadia: Landscape and Architecture in Britain and America*" (Summer, 1992), pp. 459-476 Published by: University of California Press, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3817687>

³⁸⁰ C. Williams-Ellis '*England and the Octopus*', p.104 Facsimile Edition, Beacon Press, 1996

and praised a range of green programmes available to all age groups.³⁸¹ Secondly, whereas the William-Ellis's work focused on unregulated development spilling out into the countryside, her project, though originally premised on access rights, also became re-directed to a thorough questioning of the restricted and despoiled landscape to which access was being demanded.³⁸² Thus both authors took to task various aspects of rural planning regulations, and pointed their fingers with great passion at those various bodies or individuals deemed to be responsible. William-Ellis' with his '*Devil's Dictionary*', provided a more systematic name and shame exercise of the subjects he found unacceptable in their present form or location, such as '*Advertisements*', or '*Bungalows*', adding a set of photographic illustrations sometimes with contrasting evidence showing where he believed the planners had got it right, and where they had not, (figs 98,99).³⁸³

Clearly much had changed in the period between the publications, with Godwin incorporating some of the elements in her images to which Williams-Ellis objected. For example advertising hoardings – so often a gift to photographers, or pylons and aerial masts as unavoidable features of the modern landscape. Furthermore there were aspects of his aestheticism that she would have found insupportable, in particular his description of allotments as necessary evils.³⁸⁴ However, she would undoubtedly have agreed with aspects of his arguments regarding short-term abuse of natural resources bringing disturbing long-term consequences. Such as the inconsiderate siting and later abandonment of large military buildings, the general mistreatment of waterways, and large-scale replacement of native trees with conifer plantations.³⁸⁵ Additionally, the subject of bungalows became a short-term feature in several of Ted Hughes' correspondences with Godwin in which he repeatedly described the proliferation of Ireland's '*...hideous modern holiday-style bungalows...*' echoing aspects of William-Ellis' frequent and often savage

³⁸¹ See Godwin's, *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.158-189, in this section she both praised and castigated the bodies and individuals that she believed to be encouraging either a respect or disrespect, or worse – a cover up for activities taking place in rural life. This topic was discussed at many of her public talks, such as *The Schumacher Lecture*, September, 1991

³⁸² F. Godwin, *Our Forbidden Land*, p.27

³⁸³ C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p.131, 159 and 166

³⁸⁴ See Godwin's discussions on allotments and smallholdings in *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.43-7 and 130

³⁸⁵ C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p.172, 178 & 176

Also, See Godwin's discussions of '*Military exclusion areas*' and '*MOD remains*' in *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.20-22 and 155-7

representations of the ‘*gratuitously flashy or exotic*’ residences springing up around Britain, with the final image in his rogues gallery featuring an advertisement representing all he was opposed to: ‘The *CottaBunga*’, (fig 100).³⁸⁶ Hughes blamed the phenomena on Ireland’s admission to the EEC, and the new affluence it brought. Yet, his subsequent descriptions of it representing ‘*a new sort of famine... What’s gone now is that old world style...spiritual values, their hidden heirloom from the heroic days*’ hinted at deeper anxieties prevalent in late twentieth century sensibilities, concerned with the horror and perceptions of loss for a spoilt landscape.³⁸⁷ Intriguingly, Godwin’s silence on the subject suggested either a later self-censorship of her reply, or perhaps a genuine refusal to be drawn on the subject.³⁸⁸

Another area where Godwin found common ground with William-Ellis was through the authorised disrespect imposed on Stonehenge, and likewise the public to which it belonged. For his part, he cited a list of ‘*outrageous*’ items cluttering and obscuring this ‘*venerable*’ site, including ‘*a derelict aerodrome*’, ‘*an offensive pink bungalow*’ and ‘*a café*’, all of which were highlighted again in his first image (fig 101).³⁸⁹ In Godwin’s ‘*English Heritage’s ‘theme park’ approach to Stonehenge*’ (1989), she spoke of showing the monument the way it had been interpreted by the heritage industry (fig 102).³⁹⁰ Thus her objections to its current guardians were made unambiguous via the centralised series of tawdry signs representing significant moments in Britain’s past, crassly positioned over a municipal designed subway, which made the scene appear more like a shopping complex than an approach to an ancient monument. Additionally, the perplexed expression of a passing tourist seemed to epitomise all that Godwin believed was wrong with English Heritage’s low-budget and unimaginative style.

A second image by Godwin picked up on more of William-Ellis’ comparatively tamer protests regarding the site ‘*Hemmed in by railings, [and] guarded by a turnstile and a*

³⁸⁶ T. Hughes, letter to Fay Godwin, 11.06.84, ‘Literary Correspondence’, file, FGA, BL, his views were repeated in two subsequent letters (3.09.84 and 30.05.85), where the repetition suggests a preoccupation combined with/or his having forgotten that he mentioned the subject previously.

C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p.142

³⁸⁷ Ibid

³⁸⁸ T. Hughes letter to Godwin, 3.09.84, ‘Literary Correspondence’ file, BL

³⁸⁹ C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p.131 & first illustration (np)

³⁹⁰ F. Godwin, talk/slideshow at Schumacher Lectures, September 1991 a/c recording, GFA

post-card kiosk...'³⁹¹ In '*Nightguard, Stonehenge*' (1988) she satirised the security fence surrounding the stones with another comic sentry, like the sheep in '*Brassington, Derbyshire*' (fig 103), on this occasion, the large sarsen with its lion-like profile appeared to be guarding its fellow stones; the suggestion proposed a fossilised solution to an equally fossilised attitude. However, divergent professional interests also separated both authors, therefore the last image was also to be understood in terms of her access protest regarding the conditions and restrictions placed on professional photographers in public places, or places open to the public. In the latter context she strongly resented the fact that she would not be able to contribute her '*personal interpretation*' of this well known landmark such as her predecessors Edwin Smith and Bill Brandt, or contemporary, Paul Caponigro had all achieved.³⁹² In Brandt's image of *Stonehenge Under Snow* (1947), used on the cover of *Picture Post's* '*Crisis Issue*' (19.04.47), the bleakness of the scene was intended to reflect the almost bankrupt condition of post-war Britain, (fig 104).³⁹³ Godwin's image also aimed at austerity by minimising, but certainly not concealing the wire fence and its offensive sign, with her message intending to show both public access rights, and artistic freedom to be on the ropes in Britain under Thatcherism.

William-Ellis' work was published in an era when the growing numbers of car owners ('one million by 1930') were encouraged to discover the countryside via an expanding infrastructure.³⁹⁴ This also generated a vast library in travel literature, which made motorists almost collusive with capitalism, as the development of rural areas rapidly became exposed to increased amounts of tourists expecting to see the advertised sights from the comfort of their vehicle. Popular examples included: H.V. Morton's series of guidebooks, which began with *In Search of England* (1935), also the *Shell Guide* series starting with John Betjeman's *Cornwall* (1934). Yet as an experienced motorist, William Ellis' contention with the long-term effects of motoring were primarily concerned with its attendant problems of unregulated roadside constructions rather than rural exploitation, over-subscription to the road being more of a late

³⁹¹ C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p.131

³⁹² F. Godwin, talk/slideshow, Schumacher Lectures, September 1991, a/c recording GFA

³⁹³ M. Haworth-Booth (Ed.), '*Afterword*', *Literary Britain*, (np)

³⁹⁴ D.N. Jeans, '*Defining the Threat*', in *Planning and the Myth of the English Countryside, in the Interwar Period*, Cambridge Journals, Rural History, Vol.1, Issue 2, 1990 p.252
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=2639600>

twentieth century problem.³⁹⁵ This was where Godwin took up the baton by declaring ‘*Cars are the single biggest polluter; they rob us of land...they also pollute what is left of the countryside with tourism.*’³⁹⁶ A motorist herself, she was aware of the precarious nature of her objections, and justified her anger by focussing it on the collapsing public transport system, and the heritage industries’ Disneyfication of the countryside, both of which, she contended contributed to its aesthetic and physical deterioration with additional road schemes being built to visit the ‘*theme parks*’.³⁹⁷ Godwin’s conflicting interests are also represented in ‘*Meall Mor, Glencoe*’ (1988), an image taken apparently for unknown reasons whilst driving through the region (fig 82).³⁹⁸ In Anthony Stokes opinion, she would have been attracted by the graphic qualities first and foremost, and yet, as an environmental consideration emerged, she spoke of it being part of the subconscious process often at work in photography (see my discussion regarding the Salman Rushdie portrait in Chapter One).³⁹⁹ From a third perspective, Tom Normand wrote of her conscious attempts to balance the demand for public access with the need for environmental protection.⁴⁰⁰ Undoubtedly, the answer probably accommodates aspects from each of these viewpoints. Yet ultimately for Godwin, the metaphorical/environmental possibilities came to outweigh any early aesthetic considerations, and governed her descriptions of it thereafter: ‘*The road takes us to the magic mountain, or does it? Will the magic mountain survive us all going there?*’⁴⁰¹

Part Three: The Post-War Years

Rootes third phase emerged in the post-war period, and was swiftly progressed by the rise in Mass media (literature, television, radio and newspapers). Amongst the many benefits introduced by that process was the success of The World Wide Fund for Nature, and its early media-style campaigning was eventually adopted by all environmental groups, as Rootes noted it was ‘...*launched in Britain in 1961 by an*

³⁹⁵ C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p.166-8

³⁹⁶ F. Godwin, *Our Forbidden Land*, p.22

³⁹⁷ Ibid

³⁹⁸ Godwin often referred to the unpremeditated origins of the cover image on *Our Forbidden Land*, before it was assigned an environmental role. This discussion has been based on her talk/slideshow at the Schumacher Lecture, September, 1991

³⁹⁹ A. Stokes, Interview with the author, 10.10.12

⁴⁰⁰ T. Normand, *Scottish Photography: A History*, Luath Press Ltd/Scottish Arts Council, 2007, p.58

⁴⁰¹ F. Godwin, talk/slideshow at the Schumacher Lecture, September, 1991, audio cassette recording, GFA

*appeal through the pages of a mass-market tabloid newspaper...rapidly collect[ing] large sums by public subscription.*⁴⁰² Horace Herring's study showed that as the decade progressed various newspapers including, '*The Observer, The Guardian and New Scientist...through the efforts of a few interested journalists...began to present stories about effects of pollution.*'⁴⁰³ Yet on the other hand, information being broadcast more widely and more vividly to the public also began to invoke a sense of apprehension. That is, just as the trauma and legacy of the Second World War began to recede so popular anxieties were replaced, or reignited by a range of its consequences, in particular the acceleration of technological progress. Public angst was increased with the development of nuclear power, and its effects on both national defence matters, as well as commercial and industrial growth. Also, the industrialisation of the countryside following the 1947 Agriculture Act, meant that mechanisation and chemical innovations in farming reduced the need for human labour: '*No longer would farming remain an essentially biological process based on natural cycles. Instead it was destined to become a factory operation...*'⁴⁰⁴

In 1990, Godwin's textual representations of these technological advancements demonstrated how, often times, they had resulted in further encroachments on the countryside and public access rights.⁴⁰⁵ In her images she used a familiar device of the lone goon-like guardian on the borderline. In the first case, '***Footpath illegally closed by the military at Lydd***', a sheep patrols the military fence installed across a public footpath at Lydd, its haughty expression reflecting the arrogant, and illegal actions of the MOD, (fig 105). In the second case, '***Dungeness nuclear power station, Kent***' (1974), the sleeping fisherman is seated like a valiant King Canute in front of a vanquished sea. The sinister concrete mass behind him represented not just a politically controversial site, but as Peter Melchett noted its slumbering watchman served as a warning against public apathy towards the dangers of what is happening in the world around us, (fig 106).⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰² C. Rootes, '*Nature Protection Organizations in England*', p.7

⁴⁰³ H. Herring, '*The Conservation Society*', p385

⁴⁰⁴ G. Harvey, '*The Killing of the Countryside*', Jonathan Cape, p.8

⁴⁰⁵ See Godwin's discussion of nuclear weaponry and power in *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.20-2, also p.74

⁴⁰⁶ P. Melchett, '*opening speech*' at Godwin's Retrospective exhibition: *Landmarks*, Barbican Centre, London 2001, '*Landmarks, Private View, Barbican*' audio cassette recording, 25.07.01, GFA

Another facet of popular anxiety was the widely advertised fear of a national population explosion. In 1960 when new global population statistics were released they revealed an increase of one billion since 1927. The BBC2 documentary programme *A Birds Eye View – ‘This Green and Pleasant Land’* (1969), relayed the message by commencing with a series of ominous statistics, which included:

*If the whole country was parcelled out between us, about one third of an acre is all we would get each...and it's going to get less. By the end of the century there's going to be another fifteen million squashed into this island.*⁴⁰⁷

This preoccupation led to the formation of *The Conservation Society* in the mid-1960s, which was one of the first British groups to support birth control, considered a radical solution at the time.⁴⁰⁸ Herring's research on the group marked the evolutionary stages of modern environmentalism shaped by wider socio-cultural, political and economic changes in post-war Britain, and he emphasised the generation divide for the different attitudes they brought to the fore.⁴⁰⁹ In his article, chronicling the rise and fall of *The Conservation Society*, he described the members as '*sixties liberalism and traditional conservatism*', before noting that their enthusiasm for a modern fix was unmatched by the traditional campaigning methods of lobbying their cause.⁴¹⁰ He also noted, as a group it was very successful until 1973, at which point it failed to appreciate the emerging counter-culture's appetite for '*direct action*' and '*public protest*.' Instead, it became a victim of the '*intellectual and policy paralysis*' of its founder and many of its older membership.⁴¹¹

The pressure for change was mainly initiated by younger, more radical organisations focussing on single issues, with a distinctly metropolitan, and a less class-defined identity, notably *Greenpeace* and *Friends of the Earth*.⁴¹² As Herring and others have observed, in the '60s and early '70s, conservationism was still largely conflated

⁴⁰⁷ A. Dobie, (Narrator) '*A Birds Eye View*' – '*This Green and Pleasant Land*', BBC2, 22.06.69. Scriptwriter: John Lloyd <http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/aerialjourneys/5318.shtml>

⁴⁰⁸ H. Herring, *The Conservation Society*, p.382

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, pp.382-3

⁴¹⁰ Ibid, pp.383

⁴¹¹ Ibid, pp.392-97

⁴¹² C. Rootes, *1968 and the Environmental Movement in Europe*, p.8. For a wider discussion of this phase see Veldman's chapter '*The Greening of Britain*', in *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, pp205-28

with elitism and was therefore viewed with suspicion by many with a political agenda. For example, Anthony Crosland represented many on the Left when he described conservationists as '*pulling up the ladder behind them*', later he accused sections of its middle and upper-class membership of being '*hostile to growth and indifferent to the needs of ordinary people...[for which] preservation of the status quo is the sole consideration.*'⁴¹³ Lowe and Goyder's comprehensive investigation of the changing profile of environmentalism in Britain demonstrated the complexity of the subject, along with the need for caution before imposing rigid categorisation, because historically, groups tend to defy this type of ordering as their membership changed, and/or organisational aims altered through time.⁴¹⁴ My earlier example of *The Ramblers* showed that not all the older organisations were peopled by the middle or upper classes, although most came through the century primarily concerned with matters of conservation, and their outlook was predominantly more local and rural.⁴¹⁵

In terms of literature, there are many examples of publications that left an indelible mark on the rise of modern environmentalism, some of which became 'bibles' for the cause. These included Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, (1962), Edward Goldsmith's *A Blueprint for Survival*, E.F. Schumacher's '*Small is Beautiful*', (1973), and James Lovelock's *Gaia*' hypothesis that the planet's life system is composed of a single organism had profound resonances with Deep Green ideology, (1969, published, 1979). Christopher Rootes, whose paper dealt with the whole of Europe, spoke for many observers by crediting the astute timing of the *New Yorker* magazine to serialise Carson's book, stating:

*[It] marked a step change in the development of environmental consciousness, not because its warnings about the effects of indiscriminate use of pesticides were new but because they were published in a popular magazine and created a media sensation. The time was ripe...*⁴¹⁶

⁴¹³ H. Herring, '*The Conservation Society*', p.395

⁴¹⁴ P. Lowe and J. Goyder, '*Aims*', '*The organisation of environmental groups*' in *Environmental Groups in Politics*, pp.33-7

⁴¹⁵ See James McKay and Jean-Francois Mouhot, summary on the profile of older environmental groups and 'third wave groups' in their '*Briefing Paper*' for '*Witness Seminar: The Green break-through of 1989: meaning, significance and legacy*' 14.10.10, p.3

http://www.ngo.bham.ac.uk/Witness_Seminar_Green_break-through_of_1989.htm

⁴¹⁶ C. Rootes, *1968 and the Environmental Movement in Europe*, p.2

Silent Spring (1962)

Carson, a marine biologist and a best-selling author, launched her book as a wake-up call to flag the pernicious side effects of widely used insecticides and herbicides. Upon publication, *Silent Spring* presented Carson's timely, and considered response to the deadly toxicity levels in the production and distribution of synthetic pesticides, flooding the markets in the decade following the war. Recently, Laura Orlando wrote of the times, '*Few people understood the dangers to life that these new chemicals presented...most people believed that you had to be an industrial worker to get sick.*'⁴¹⁷ Undoubtedly, a large part of the book's success was due to the times in which it appeared, as Orlando emphasised, the industry had not yet been educated in '*the politics and sophistry of environmental issues*', which nowadays would include a PR programme to convince the public of the product's safety, consequently it was unprepared for the substantial public backlash.⁴¹⁸ Conversely, Carson and her associates had meticulously pored over any possible legal consequences for defamation before publishing, and therefore her message was able to reach a global audience quite quickly.⁴¹⁹

In Britain, as with many other European countries, the publication of Carson's book (1963) met with a very different set of responses. This was often premised on the belief that the relatively unrestricted use of chemicals was largely an American problem.⁴²⁰ Mark Wilson's research has shown how the muted public reception was based on a range of reasons, including: economical, legislative, historical and cultural differences between the two countries.⁴²¹ In the first case, Britain's slow recovery rate from the war meant chemical products were aimed mainly at the agricultural market, unlike America's more affluent domestic market where they were also widely used in the home, enabling a wider public experience of/backlash against the harmful potential for the eco-system.⁴²² Wilson also referred to adverse public reaction in

⁴¹⁷ L. Orlando, '*Trying to Silence Silent Spring*', '*Industry Attacks on Dissent: From Rachel Carson to Oprah*', in *Dollars & Sense: Real World Economics*, 2002 (np)
<http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2002/0302orlando.html>

⁴¹⁸ Ibid

⁴¹⁹ Ibid

⁴²⁰ Ibid, webpage: '*Why Europe responded differently*'

⁴²¹ M. Wilson in conversation with Dr Jan Oosthoek, *Podcast 44: 'Silent Spring at 50: a comparison perspective'* 21.12.11

<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/mml/exploring-environmental-history-podcast-silent-spring-50>

⁴²² M. Wilson, '*Silent Spring at 50*', 21.12.11

America following nuclear testing in the early '50s, where fall-out affected a number of communities living near the Nevada testing site, in particular Utah where contamination was reported to have entered the food chain, (denied at Government level), which also caused public alarm.⁴²³

In the second instance, the British Government kept a much closer monitoring system on the Chemical industry.⁴²⁴ The former issued and controlled operating licenses to the latter, therefore this ensured not only an essential mutual trust between the two bodies, but also a shared belief that the type of pesticide problems Carson was flagging had already been addressed.⁴²⁵ And lastly, Wilson described the 'top-down' reaction to the publication, rather than grass roots response it had provoked in America. Here, the tradition of vested interests in English ruralism guaranteed it a favourable reception with the privileged class, albeit as a measure for sustainable game stocks. As Wilson observed, highly influential figures such as Prince Philip became one of Carson's strongest supporters, and his response for prompt action ensured a subsequent domino effect ran through government, and the chemical industry, despite the initial opposition from other high ranking officials such as Viscount Hailsham who claimed: '*...many practices condemned by Miss Carson do not go on in this country...the pattern of our agriculture...does not lend itself to similar scales...as she describes.*'⁴²⁶ This high level response brought together landowners and supporters of wildlife protection groups – many hailing from less privileged backgrounds, in a common purpose, even if for diverse reasons.⁴²⁷ Notably, the circumstances that brought these people together indicated a turning point from the social factors involved in Kinder Scout.

The Problematic Inheritance of Romanticism in the Post-war years of the Environmental movement in the UK

According to Wilson another critical aspect of Carson's publication was her leanings

⁴²³ Ibid

⁴²⁴ Ibid

⁴²⁵ Ibid

⁴²⁶ Ibid, Wilson stated that Hailsham was effectively forced by Prince Philip to perform a volte-face, by agreeing to debate the issues raised in Carson's book.

Hailsham's quotation came from M. Stoll, '*Rachel Carson's Silent Spring 'A Book That Changed The World'*', webpage: '*Why Europe responded differently*'

⁴²⁷ M. Wilson, '*Silent Spring at 50*', 21.12.11

towards nineteenth century thinking regarding environmentalism, with its roots in British romanticism and American transcendentalism.⁴²⁸ Yaakov Garb made a similar point in his research by arguing it was the key weakness in the book, leaving her open to attack by the chemical industry, which amongst other accusations described her as a '*fanatic defender of the cult of the balance of nature*.'⁴²⁹ Within the same year of her publication, Monsanto published a parody entitled: '*The Desolate Year*', overlaying the title with images of the crawling destructive insects to drive home its chilling point to a visually impressionable audience (fig 107).⁴³⁰ Playing to the public's fear factor, the article envisaged the nightmare scenario that would automatically ensue in a chemically untreated environment.⁴³¹ Garb described the attack as an established and deliberate ploy to weaken the scientific, or rational evidence of the Carson's work, as it implied and invoked historical notions of the romantic/mystical attitude to nature as inviolable and immutable, and above the intellectual or scientific applications of man.⁴³² Notwithstanding Carson's professional bias for biological/natural solutions instead of chemical/synthetic ones, Garb felt that she drew too closely on emotive albeit persuasive eighteenth century ideas about the divine order of nature, which took her work out of the scientific genre into one that '*inverted a tradition of nature writing*' tapping into '*a pastoral ideal*.'⁴³³

Both Wilson and Garb's discussions referred to an earlier publication by Murray Bookchin, '*Our Synthetic Environment*' (1962). They noted that although the latter's argument was premised on anthropocentric concerns regarding the over-use of chemical pesticides, it failed to catch the public attention as unlike Carson, who had made her argument accessible to a non-scientific readership, whereas Bookchin obfuscated his points with an overly technical content.⁴³⁴ Garb argued that for the latter,

⁴²⁸ Ibid

⁴²⁹ Y. Garb, '*Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring"*', Fall 1995 issue of *Dissent* (pp. 539-546) Science, Technology, and Society, MIT, '*Politics, and Its Avoidance*', p.540
http://bgu.academia.edu/YaakovGarb/Papers/267093/Rachel_Carsons_Silent_Spring In

⁴³⁰ '*The Desolate Year*', Oct 1962, *Monsanto Magazine*, pp 4-9, featured on the International Society for Environmental Ethics website
<http://iseethics.org/2011/12/02/the-desolate-year-monsanto-magazine-1962/>

⁴³¹ Ibid

⁴³² Y. Garb, '*Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring"*' p.540

⁴³³ Ibid, p.541 and p.544

⁴³⁴ Ibid, p.539. Bookchin's use of the pseudonym 'Lewis Herber' suggests that he too was protecting himself from potential lawsuits.

*There is...no preordained state that must be preserved forever, and the "quasi-mystical" and unreserved valorization of "nature" and the "natural" is misguided...For him human emotions in the presence of nature are not an indication of nature's special metaphysical status (as they were for the Transcendentalists with whom Carson sympathized).*⁴³⁵

The main point here has been to show that Garb's argument emphasised the inherent weakness of the spirit of romanticism still active in modern environmental thinking, and that even with Carson's 'insider' status, her sympathies (both real and perceived) had made her vulnerable, when 'locking horns' with the powerful worlds of industry and commerce. And yet, he also recognised its allure for provoking an emotional response from her audience, admitting not only did it '*frighten...people...link...health to nature for the first time as a topic of heated public debate...*' but retained a relevance – because '*Curiously, it may have required an "apolitical" challenge to pesticides to initiate this process.*'⁴³⁶ As discussed in the previous chapter, Godwin was highly sensitive to her images being described as 'romantic' citing its modern connotations of being 'slushy', and despite subscribing so closely to the tradition, she was adamant that her work should be understood as being grounded in the real world, always showing the evidence of man's interventions. Therefore, although she was exhibiting a contradictory position on the matter, she was clearly aware of the devaluing effect that romanticism in any sense imposed on a serious body of work. By maintaining this position, as Ian Jeffrey noted, she retained a certain flexibility, and something of a shield for her work as the perceived artifice of landscape photography fell into crisis towards the end of the '70s.

Carson's publication did much to fortify the foundations in Britain, for an emerging consensus of anxiety regarding an increasingly damaged environment during the '70s. That is, although economics - the Age of Keynes, played a central role in the post-war boom throughout the West, its various side effects such as the population explosion, or revolution in agricultural practices prompted a strong reaction by a range of publicly minded individuals or (newly formed) organisations in Britain. *A Blueprint*

⁴³⁵ M. Wilson, '*Silent Spring at 50*', 21.12.11

Y. Garb, '*Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring"*', p.542

⁴³⁶ Ibid, p545 & 546

for Survival first appeared in the *Ecologist* journal before being published as a book.⁴³⁷ Meredith Veldman claimed that, ‘*what the early Greens sought was not environmental reform but revolution, a radical alteration in the structures, values, and assumption of modern society.*’⁴³⁸ She noted the authors’ use of key strategies prior to publishing in order to shake their target audience into action, which included astute media appearances by Edward Goldsmith, along with a ‘*statement of support*’ from thirty-six respected, and mainly scientific authorities to engender more extensive media coverage.⁴³⁹ Also intelligent timing, as their manifesto was quickly followed by the highly influential *Limits to Growth* publication on global resource exhaustion and The Stockholm Conference, a watershed event in environmental history.⁴⁴⁰

One of the book’s other key strengths was the use of apocalyptic language. This served as a tool of both persuasion, as well as conferring on it the power of authority in distinguishing between good and evil. This traditional form of literature was rooted in ancient times, with stories of *The Flood*, and *The Book of Revelation*, and by the nineteenth century had crossed into wider genres.⁴⁴¹ Commenting on its social potency, the historian, Justin Champion, stated:

*If you really believe you have in your pocket a book that reveals all the universal truths of the world and the universe, and you can understand it...you’re in a very, very powerful situation... If you’re on the receiving end of that, “fear” will be very, very important.*⁴⁴²

Even after the East/West tensions relaxed with the end of the Cold War, (1989) people’s memories of how ordinary life might easily be reduced to instant chaos remained a viable threat. One organisation that recently used a similarly combined set of psychological devices to attract more support was *Greenpeace* in their

⁴³⁷ E. Goldsmith et al., *A Blueprint for Survival*, first published as Vol.2, No.1 of The Ecologist, then as a revised edition in Penguin Specials, 1972, selling ‘*more than 750,000 copies in paperback*’ http://www.theecologist.org/theecologist/266662/about_the_ecologist.html

⁴³⁸ M. Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain* pp.228 & 230

⁴³⁹ Ibid, pp.232-6

Also, see ‘*Statement of Support*’, E. Goldsmith et al, *A Blueprint for Survival*, pp11-13

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴⁴¹ See Toby Lichtig’s article: ‘*Apocalypse literature now, and then*’, *Guardian*, 20.01.10

⁴⁴² J. Champion, in conversation with Juliet Gardiner, *The Book of Revelation* 3/10, *The History of the Future*, BBC4, 12.09.12

campaigning pamphlet: '*Think of the planet Earth as a 46 year old*', '*Against All Odds*' (1990).⁴⁴³ Firstly by reducing the planet's existence to a more accessible timescale (from '4,600 million years' to '46 years old') it accentuated the shock value of Man's nihilistic activities, and secondly it reduced humans to a primitive state in order to shame and panic the reader into action: '*Now we stand like brutish infants, gloating over this meteoric rise to ascendancy, poised on the brink of the final mass extinction...*'⁴⁴⁴ It also makes an intriguing comparison with Clough Williams-Ellis' not dissimilar theme in the opening paragraphs of *England and the Octopus*, in which he paternalistically referred to mankind having time to '*straighten out our muddles and mistakes.*'⁴⁴⁵ Additionally, as already discussed the *Greenpeace* approach also contrasted with Godwin's generally less alarmist and more constructive approach in *Our Forbidden Land*.

Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if people mattered (1973)

E.F. Schumacher's book *Small is Beautiful* is generally considered to be one of the most influential texts in the modern history of environmental movements. Its central message was the call for human-scale and human-friendly technology to be globally available, (as opposed to industrial gigantism favoured and exported by the West); its timely appearance, in the same year as the OAPC oil crisis, would have inadvertently supported many of those themes. Drawn from three decades of Schumacher's work, it focussed on a range of subjects from the spiritual realm to matters of practical land management, as well as an alternative economic plan for the future. According to Veldman his notion of appropriate technology was not original, but was more successful than an attempt in the previous decade by The Committee of 100, in which they had proposed that small schemes were more appropriate in the international aid programme.⁴⁴⁶ As with previous examples, the timing of *Small is Beautiful* was key to its success. Jonathan Porritt described it as having '*caught the*

⁴⁴³ Greenpeace Campaigning pamphlet, '*Think of the planet Earth as a 46 year old*', '*Against All Odds*', 1990

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁴⁵ C. Williams-Ellis, '*England and the Octopus*', p.11

⁴⁴⁶ Veldman relayed the message of the Committee of 100 - a group that became involved with CND they stated: "*Massive aid schemes can't solve [poverty or hunger]. They upset the local pattern of life, breed corruption and often make matters worse as in India today. We need thousands of small schemes.*" *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, p.150

zeitgeist of the times', which Veldman observed was 'a period of heightened environmental consciousness and pessimism.'⁴⁴⁷

Schumacher was very much a product of his times. As with other eco-activists, he was in favour of decentralisation of power, believing wider availability of user-friendly economic development to be the way forward: '*Centralisation is mainly an idea of order; decentralisation, of freedom.*'⁴⁴⁸ More pertinent to this thesis is that many have also commented on how his work reflected the historically romantic strand of environmentalism, specifically by his rejection of the predominantly progressive achievements of science and technology in the twentieth century. For example, John Toye referred to Schumacher's regular laments for the loss of traditional higher pursuits in favour of the merely useful, although he also acknowledged it as '*an optimistic kind of romanticism, full of hope and inspiration for the future...*'⁴⁴⁹ Veldman also described how *Schumacher offered a holistic analysis grounded on romantic assumptions and rooted in his own quest for religious truth...[by speaking]...within the context of an established intellectual and cultural tradition of protest.*'⁴⁵⁰ Thus when *Small is Beautiful* was published in Britain, detractors used familiar methods to attack Schumacher's views. One of his best known critics was a fellow economist, Wilfred Beckerman who as Porritt noted '*sparred with him on BBC TV in the early 1970s*', as well as producing his own books to counter Schumacher's arguments: '*In Defence of Economic Growth*' (1974), and more pointedly, '*Small Is Stupid*' (1995); the latter recalling the Monsanto response to Carson's book, (discussed earlier).⁴⁵¹ Porritt also cited Margaret Thatcher as a one-time admirer, turned critic of Schumacher's stance on 'big' technology, of which she said '*[it] has helped us enormously...and we have to learn to live with it.*'⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁷ J. Porritt, '*Schumacher's Big Society*', in *Archive on 4*, BBC Radio 4, 25.06.11, and M. Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, p.299

⁴⁴⁸ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*, Abacus edition, 1974, p.203

⁴⁴⁹ J. Toye: '*The world improvement plans of Fritz Schumacher*', *Oxford Journals, Economics & Social Sciences, Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 36, Issue 2, Pp. 387-403, Rcvd Mar 17, Accepted Oct 18, 2011, pub'd online Dec 17,2011 <http://cje.oxfordjournals.org/content/36/2/387.full>, p.401

See also Neil Carter's comments regarding 'the ongoing commitment of all greens' towards '*greater democratic control over the development and use of technology. The Politics of the Env, Ideas, Activism, Policy*' p.48

⁴⁵⁰ M. Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, p293

⁴⁵¹ J. Porritt, '*Schumacher's Big Society*', Radio 4

⁴⁵² Ibid

The spiritual strand of Schumacher's text can also be seen as a symptom of the back to simple living culture of the period in terms of a declared goal of simplifying human relations to technology.⁴⁵³ Veldman described how in the mid-60s for many members of the The Soil Association, '*...ecology represented a world view rather than a scientific discipline.*'⁴⁵⁴ The movement's journal entitled '*Mother Earth*' signified the metaphysical associations that had dominated it from its beginnings. Above all, it had cultivated a reputation for raising itself above merely practical matters, by delving into a rekindling of man's deeper, more spiritual relationship with the living planet: '*reincorporating humanity into the biological and spiritual web of relationships that undergirded the universe...*'⁴⁵⁵ Again, this reference evoked Carson's references to '*the vast web of life [with] Nature...setting up all that wonderful and intricate system of checks and balances to protect the forest from undue damage by insects.*'⁴⁵⁶

Both Veldman and Porritt discussed Schumacher's predictions of a looming global crisis as being characteristic of his peers in the post-war decades.⁴⁵⁷ Although interestingly, both appeared divided on whether Schumacher should be represented as a typical doom merchant. Veldman described him as being very positive in terms of maintaining belief in the good of humanity, stating '*[it] gave Schumacher a message in striking contrast to the "doom and gloom, woe is upon us" cry of many eco-activists.*'⁴⁵⁸ Conversely, Porritt described him as '*a party pooper of biblical proportions*', and quoted from one of his public lectures: '*Economists are now arranging deckchairs on the Titanic.*'⁴⁵⁹ Schumacher's own words revealed a very stark view of the future reflecting the message from Greenpeace (quoted above)

We have been living on the capital of living nature for some time, but at a fairly modest rate. It is only since the end of World War II that we have succeeded in increasing this rate to alarming proportions. In comparison with what is going on now and what has been going on, progressively, during the last quarter of a century,

⁴⁵³ Toye noted: '*the references to God—and Beelzebub—were much more frequent than was at all normal in books on development economics in the 1970s.*' J. Toye, *The world improvement plans of Fritz Schumacher*, 17.03.11, p.391

⁴⁵⁴ M. Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, p261

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 261 and 264

⁴⁵⁶ R. Carson, *Silent Spring*, p.257-8

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid, p288

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid, p.295

⁴⁵⁹ J. Porritt, *Schumacher's Big Society*, Radio4

*all the industrial activities of mankind up to and including World War II are as nothing...*⁴⁶⁰

In 1991, Godwin was amongst a number of speakers invited to take part in the annual Schumacher Lectures in Bristol. Her identification with the founding tenets of E.F. Schumacher's philosophy – in terms of supporting the idea that many areas of human activity could and should be conducted on a human-scale, rather than through powerful, and faceless authorities, or via big technology, were immediately legible in the different organisations she challenged in *Our Forbidden Land*. Additionally, her wish to be counted amongst Schumacher's supporters was also clearly expressed in her opening comments, when she introduced herself and her work as representing '*the ordinary person...work[ing] on a normal level...*' in order to report back on the condition of the British countryside at the end of the 1980s.⁴⁶¹

W.G. Hoskins: *English Landscapes* (1976-8)

A recent article by Margaret Drabble discussing both Godwin, and her work, described the latter as being part of the revitalised interest in topography, across the arts in Britain, during the 1970s.⁴⁶² Drabble stated it was '*part of the zeitgeist...foreshadowing the environmentally aware "nature writing"*' referring to the fact that the '70s was something of a twilight zone for romanticised/poetic representations of, or presenting more naïve attitudes towards, the British countryside.⁴⁶³ This comment has recently been echoed by Shirley Toulson's recollections that neither herself, nor Godwin, felt an '*acute*' sense that the land needed protection whilst they were collaborating on *The Drovers' Roads of Wales* (1977), rather, '*it was a feeling of the land as a book that you were reading, not that you were scribbling all over...*'⁴⁶⁴ Drabble also suggested the popularity of the subject owed much to the televised version of W.G. Hoskins' *The Making of the English Landscape*, 1976-8, based on his original publication in 1955.⁴⁶⁵ Ian Jeffrey's observations – made almost thirty years earlier, had gone further by making

⁴⁶⁰ E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*, p.14

⁴⁶¹ F. Godwin, Schumacher Society Slide/Talk, audio cassette recording

⁴⁶² M. Drabble, '*Fay Godwin at the National Media Museum*', *Guardian*, 08.01.11
<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/jan/08/margaret-drabble-fay-godwin>

⁴⁶³ Ibid

⁴⁶⁴ S. Toulson Interview 01.09.2010

⁴⁶⁵ M. Drabble, '*Fay Godwin at the National Media Museum*' (np)

comparisons between the illustrations used in Hoskin's book ('*like early, primitive versions of...*') and Godwin's images, noting also how their authors (rarely Hoskins) had used the images to interrogate the land for the information it would yield suggesting a more empirical approach towards the subject.⁴⁶⁶ The sparsity of detail is particularly apparent in the sites of deserted villages often appropriated for pasture, such as '*A fifteenth-century sheep pasture at Ingersby, Leicestershire*', (fig 108), which Hoskins described as '*...a completely medieval scene...*' also Godwin's '*Not much remains of Snap*' (1974), Wiltshire, where the bone-like stone in the undergrowth might represent the remains of human dwellings, or the sheep that replaced them, (fig 109).⁴⁶⁷

Hoskins work has regularly been described as groundbreaking. As it changed previously long-held opinions that historically, England was to be viewed in two halves, with the village pattern on the arable eastern side, and the scattered system of habitation on the pastoral, Celtic western side of the country.⁴⁶⁸ His research established a more complex pattern of cultural as well as geographical factors in determining and reading the landscape in its current form.⁴⁶⁹ These perspectives had also been informed by the archaeological findings of aerial photographer, O.G.S. Crawford who revealed the landscape as a '*palimpsest*', layered with discernible traces from previous inhabitants.⁴⁷⁰ Yet, as with the previous examples, the '*limits*' of Hoskins' work have been identified through his backward-looking and romantic representations of the English landscape.⁴⁷¹ A clear example of this can be found in his frequent remarks about the destructive impulses of the twentieth century, over the long established landmarks left by previous generations, and he saw this in terms of

⁴⁶⁶ I. Jeffrey, '*Topography and Metaphor: the photography of Fay Godwin*', *Fay Godwin Landscape Photographs*, The British Council, 1983

⁴⁶⁷ W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape*, London Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, caption for Plate 33, p.115

⁴⁶⁸ W.G. Hoskins, *English Landscapes*, London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1977, p.7

⁴⁶⁹ Hoskins ten chapter headings in the BBC edition represented his different approaches to 'reading' the past in shaping the English landscape.

⁴⁷⁰ M.H. Johnson, '*Hoskins, Crawford and understanding the countryside*' in '*Making a Home: English Culture and English Landscape*', *The public Value of the Humanities*, Ed. Jonathan Bate, 2011, (np)

http://www.bloomsburyacademic.com/view/PublicValueHumanities_9781849662451/chapter-ba-9781849662451-chapter-0009.xml#ba-9781849662451-0001842

⁴⁷¹ Ibid, Point 6

both the loss of ‘*the age-long pattern of our town plans...major earthworks (hedges banks and ditches)*’, and the imposition of ‘*motorways – less said the better...*’⁴⁷²

Again, aspects of Hoskins’ argument can be discerned in Godwin’s ongoing concerns regarding the loss of historical markers in the pursuit of short-term commercial gains. For example, part of her discussions about the privatisation of public utilities included a report about ‘*the destruction of the Bronze-Age tracks around Pont Scethin by the Welsh Water Authority in the run-up to privatization.*’⁴⁷³ This event had personal resonance as an image of the bridge had been used on the cover of *Drovers Roads of Wales* (1977), where it featured invitingly as part of a number of walks (fig110). Recast in its threatened condition, the distanced perspective enabled maximum attention to be focused on the recently expunged ancient pathways, whilst also showing the bridge’s vulnerability to its destroyers appearing as if in the steely grip of the digger, (fig 111). This visual suggestion accentuated a sense of automated mindlessness as well as the irreversibility of unchecked human activity propelled by profit. In general though, Godwin was not a nostalgist, whereas Hoskins clearly fitted that description. Some twenty years her senior, he hailed from a generation that had lived through the trauma of two wars, and the fast pace of technological change, especially in the areas of weaponry, agricultural and infrastructure accelerated heightened fears of planetary annihilation in the ‘50s, particularly with the advent of the Cold War. Hence his descriptions of machinery, motors, and men of the modern era laying waste to the English landscape, suggest his rueful gaze back to the Georgian era, and a country portrayed by ‘*Constable and Gainsborough*’ signified a weariness with the pace of change as much as it revealed his suspicions: ‘*...let us turn away and contemplate the past before all is lost to the vandals.*’⁴⁷⁴

Conversely, as has been shown, Godwin had a progressive and pragmatic outlook. She positively supported the need for a functioning landscape reflecting the technical advancements of the times, whilst advocating a healthy, human-scale one that benefitted the many rather than the few. In the last monochrome book she produced: *A Perfect Republic of Shepherds* (1997), she focussed on the livelihoods of the

⁴⁷² W.G. Hoskins, *English Landscapes*, p. 37 and p.209

⁴⁷³ F. Godwin *Our Forbidden Land*, p.112

⁴⁷⁴ W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape*, p.232

‘small farmers’ working mainly on National Trust land in Cumbria. Here she expressed a ‘*reservation*’ regarding the local body’s insistence on the retention of traditional methods stating: ‘*it gives a melancholy and somewhat backward-looking aspect to the landscape*’ whilst adding ‘*It would be sad indeed if the Lake District National Park were to become a time-warp theme park, while at the same time being rapidly eroded by the modern scourge of the “great car economy”*’.⁴⁷⁵ Clearly Godwin’s middle stance between the two extremes still managed to accommodate her considerable qualms with the heritage and transport industries. On the other hand both authors were populists, as previously shown in my discussion on Raymond Moore (Chapter One), her work had always been aimed at a wider audience, which as Matthew Johnson has also shown was where Hoskins pitched the majority of his work – mainly in education via the media, or in the classroom:

*One of the reasons this legacy is so strong is that Hoskins gave such classes a method to find out and understand the landscape around them, quite literally, and he also gave them a wider national story into which they could fit their particular experiences and give them meaning.*⁴⁷⁶

I would suggest that Godwin’s trajectory has to be seen in terms of the authors discussed so far. That is, individuals fired by self-belief, and determination, then borne partly by instinct and design, and partly by the particular circumstances of their era, to the right time and right place in which to disseminate their vision to a sympathetic audience. As Shirley Toulson observed of Godwin’s career path: ‘*The times threw up the person*’, a view also echoed by Ian Jeffrey who proposed: ‘*Maybe you could think of it as a game of chance in which Fay had the correct cards*’.⁴⁷⁷

The Role of Mass Media on Environmentalism

The sharp rise in TV ownership from the 1950s onward played a dual role in popular perceptions about the British landscape. It both reinforced an idealisation of the countryside, through the persistence of the pastoral, whilst simultaneously investigating the causes of real, or fictional events that threatened the well-being of

⁴⁷⁵ F. Godwin, *A Perfect Republic of Shepherds*, The Wordsworth Trust, 1997, p.4

⁴⁷⁶ M.H. Johnson, ‘*Hoskins, Crawford and understanding the countryside*’ in ‘*Making a Home: English Culture and English Landscape*’, (np)

⁴⁷⁷ S. Toulson, Interview with author, 1.09.10, and I. Jeffrey, correspondence with author, 11.08.11

the land, and its population. Rootes' remark at the beginning of this section, (regarding the role played by newspapers in maximising support to the WWF) demonstrated the efficacy of the media. However, the reverse has also been true, that is all forms of the media played a flexible, if not somewhat duplicitous role in the post-war history of environmentalism. For example, Neil Carter has referred to the great cost paid by Greenpeace with their absolute dependency on the media for their campaigns, highlighted by the 'Brent Spar' incident, (1995), in which they overstated the potential pollution crisis if the redundant platform had to be sunk in situ.⁴⁷⁸ Carter stated: '*it lost considerable respect in the media and undermined its reputation for scientific expertise. The media felt manipulated and have since become more critical of Greenpeace...*'⁴⁷⁹

Doubts were cast on the role of the medium of TV as it became more democratised. That is, not everyone was attracted to the small screen, and nor were they impressed by the effects on its viewers. One hotly disputed view by post-war activists/observers was the loss of community, and the increasing isolation of individuals. The publisher, Victor Gollancz, believed it contributed to the fragmentation of traditional religion and spiritual values, replacing it with '*cynicism and indifference*', in his opinion: '*The opium of television is lulling people's minds, and particularly children's: there they sit, sunk in their addiction, and robbed, as the dose grows bigger...*'⁴⁸⁰ A similar view was expressed by Derek Cooper in his survey of Scotland and the Isles, when he noted the fissile effect that TV had made from the mid-60s onward to the ancient culture of community recreation where he noted: '*...people once made their own entertainment – sang, told stories, danced to the fiddle. Folklore has been replaced by "Sutherland's Law", the ceilidh is now electronic.*'⁴⁸¹

The authors of *Blueprint for Survival* expressed similar concerns about the effects of growing materialism in the post-war economic boom. They described the process as

⁴⁷⁸ N. Carter, '*The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*', pp.148-9

⁴⁷⁹ *ibid*

⁴⁸⁰ V. Gollancz, '*Spirit and Ethics*', Chapter 2 of *The Devil's Repertoire of Nuclear Bombing and the Life of Man*, Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1959, pp 99 and 100-1.

These comments were inspired by Veldman's discussion of Gollancz in *Fantasy, The Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, p.170

⁴⁸¹ D. Cooper, *Hebridean Connection*, p.ix. '*Sutherland's Law*' was a legal drama set in a small Scottish town, 1973-6, IMDb website <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0159216/>

a self-feeding disintegration of social cohesion brought on by ‘*decreasing autonomy of communities and...the increasing centralization of decision-making...*’ most evident in the wider ownership of ‘*the motor-car, the television set...*’⁴⁸²

Interestingly, the authors may not have supported the effects of TV on the population, in terms of its alienating properties, but that did not prevent Goldsmith taking advantage of it (and the radio) as a public platform to promote the book.⁴⁸³ In popular literature, Alan Sillitoe’s anti-hero, Arthur Seaton, in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958), referred to the ownership of TV as having much the same effect as Gollancz described – that of a universal pacifier. Taken from a class perspective, and apparently immured to his own vices (alcohol, gambling, cigarettes and married women), Seaton poured scorn on his fellow-working class citizens for their dependency on its status, content and latent power.⁴⁸⁴ Sillitoe’s description of television having provided mainly ‘*meretricious wordage and eye-fodder*’ during his opening speech at Godwin’s *Land* exhibition, Folkstone, April 1986, suggested his hostility towards its effects had not lost their edge in the intervening years.

The Arcadian representation of rural England in TV programmes

As TVs increasingly began to dominate the average British household, their content affected more widely the cultural changes taking place in the landscape, including those who chronicled it. Sillitoe’s Arthur Seaton’s reference to TV as a national anaesthesia proved apposite in subsequent decades, where programmes presenting sentimentalised versions of rural Britain have remained extremely popular with audiences, such as the BBC’s *Last of the Summer Wine*, *Larkrise to Candleford*, and ITV’s *Darling Buds of May*. Although researcher and environmentalist, Simon Gooden noted a change of attitude from the various broadcasting companies from the 1990s, when contemporary issues such as BSE, Foot & Mouth and live animal exports made daily headlines, stating: ‘*it projected a much darker image of rural life.*’⁴⁸⁵ However, I would suggest that his example of *The Archers* as generally idealising rural life is somewhat unfair given its ongoing coverage of real life country

⁴⁸² E. Goldsmith et al., *A Blueprint for Survival*, p.52

⁴⁸³ M. Veldman, ‘*Fantasy, The Bomb and the Greening of Britain*’, p233

⁴⁸⁴ A. Sillitoe, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, for example see pp.26, 66 and 183-4

⁴⁸⁵ S. Gooden, ‘*The Rural Ideal and the English Countryside, 1945-2000*’, *Albion*, Vol.5, Issue 1: Winter 2008, (np) http://www.zyworld.com/albionmagazineonline/rural_ideal.htm

and farming issues from the beginning (1951).⁴⁸⁶ One of the programme's Scriptwriters (and former agricultural Story Editor), Graham Harvey promoted a very Carson-like message in his book, *The Killing of the Countryside* (1997), in which he described the chemically induced sterile fields of Salisbury Plain as strikingly silent, '*There is no sound in this rolling prairie land: no buzzing of bees, no rasping of crickets, no birdsong.*'⁴⁸⁷

As Gooden pointed out, the role of the media is to '*generally foster the rural ideal*' with its primary role being to entertain.⁴⁸⁸ Peter Melchett agreed, and referred to the long record of the BBC's Natural History department for using a '*sanitised approach*' to wildlife documentary, and the difficulties it presented environmental groups hoping to forge a mutually beneficial relationship with them.⁴⁸⁹ Commenting on his early experiences (1979/80), he stated: '*there was an effort in trying not to turn them against us...to get people like David Attenborough and David Bellamy to talk about this destruction...places they were filming were disappearing as they filmed...*'⁴⁹⁰ Melchett's views on more recent BBC presentations were not greatly encouraged either, he described the first series of *Springwatch* as '*pretty weak*' as it had been filmed on organic farmland, thus free of pesticides, '*but they didn't mention that...it was unbelievable!*'⁴⁹¹ Writing in 1990, Jacquelin Burgess had also picked up on the apologist role taken by David Attenborough, as a symptom of the apolitical/adventure style of presentation in his BBC work, she stated: '*...[it] enhanced audience pleasure at the risk of underplaying or oversimplifying complex arguments, whether those pertaining to the scientific bases of environmental stress or the economic social and political structures which contribute to these consequences.*'⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid

⁴⁸⁷ G. Harvey, *The Killing of the Countryside*, p.4.

These points are also reflected in Lyn Thomas article: '*The Archers: an everyday story of old and new media*', ISET, London Metropolitan University, *The Radio Journal – International Studies in Broadcast and Audio Media*, Volume 7 Number1, 2009, pp 49-50, and BBC News article: '*Foot-and-mouth hits the soaps*', 01.03.01 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/1197164.stm>

⁴⁸⁸ S. Gooden, *The Rural Ideal and the English Countryside, 1945-2000*, (np)

⁴⁸⁹ P. Melchett, Interview with author, 15.12.10

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid

⁴⁹¹ Ibid

⁴⁹² J. Burgess *The Production and Consumption of Environmental Meanings in the Mass Media: A Research Agenda for the 1990s*, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1990), Blackwell Publishing on behalf of The RGS (with the Institute of British Geographers), p153, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/622861>

Real life Crises and Fictional Catastrophes

Television also took the offensive by penetrating public perception with factual report and fictional drama. The graphic reporting of the ecological disaster caused by the Torrey Canyon oil spill on the Cornish coastline (1967) not only raised greater public awareness on environmental damage, but also highlighted the level of human culpability, both for initiating it, and failing to deal with it effectively. Images of the armed services attempting to bomb the stricken vessel would have added a heightened sense of drama to the event, in a country only twenty years into peacetime.⁴⁹³ Some early documentaries sought to demystify the rural ideal in the late 1960s/70s. As noted at the beginning of the third phase, the BBC's *Bird's Eye View* series delivered their own warnings, these ranged from mild – to doom-mongering in a more formal and hierarchical manner; arguably its appearance on BBC2 meant their message was aimed at a more ecologically attuned audience, rather than the populace at large.

The theme of an environmental consciousness was peppered throughout both series. In '*A Land For All Seasons*, Betjeman's pastiche: '*The Harvest Hymn*' a parody of the traditional version of '*We Plough The Fields And Scatter*' included his views on the use of chemical pesticides, the practice of stubble burning and the loss of hedgerow with the opening lines: '*We spray the fields and scatter, The poison on the ground*' and later '*We fire the fields for harvest*', *The hedges swell the flame*.'⁴⁹⁴ Here, he also took a cynical swipe at the conspicuous new wealth and materialism evident in modern British farming: '*The telly lounge, and deep freeze and jaguars in the yard*', going onto suggest farmers had switched from being custodians of the land by adopting a 'jam today' attitude with the lines: '*We like whatever helps us*' and '*The earth is ours today*.'⁴⁹⁵ Betjeman sent his original version to the *Farmers Weekly* in 1966.⁴⁹⁶ Yet as Simon Gooden has shown, the situation had developed along the lines of supply and demand, he quoted Henry Plumb, President of the National Union of Farmers (1971): '*urban man wants his cheap food and his convenience catered for, but he wants the farmer somehow to manage without the benefits of that technology*

⁴⁹³ P. Barkham *Oil Spills: Legacy of the Torrey Canyon*, *Guardian*, 24.06.10

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/jun/24/torrey-canyon-oil-spill-deepwater-bp>

⁴⁹⁴ J. Betjeman, '*A Land For All Seasons*, Episode 13, 18.04.71

⁴⁹⁵ The 'Harvest Hymn' originally appeared as '*Hard Lines*' in '*Farmers Weekly*', 02.10.64, reproduced in Stephen Games' '*Betjeman's England*, John Murray, 2009 pp.56-7

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid

*which he takes for granted.*⁴⁹⁷

Two of the most popular TV dramas during the 70s were: *Doomwatch* (1970-2), and *The Survivors*, (1975-77), which focussed on manmade disasters by re-enacting, or simply creating other doomsday scenarios.⁴⁹⁸ Their creators, Kit Pedlar and Gerry Davis, and Terry Nation, respectively, had originally intended their storylines to represent a credible sequence of events with just the thin veil of fiction to separate them from a plausible reality.⁴⁹⁹ Horace Herring described how Pedlar, as a scientist, was also actively involved with grassroots activities including: contributing to the alternative technology magazine *Undercurrents*, and as a speaker at *The Conservationist Society's* lecture series at the height of its success.⁵⁰⁰ Thus early advocates of pro-active environmentalism acted across the media, and exploited the power of public platforms in their quest to affect the nation's thinking.

Ian Jeffrey, whose comments on Godwin's changing style have already been discussed, went on to state that in his opinion, her early walkers' guides echoed a form of TV presentation, which also reflected a grim picture of Britain in the mid-70s:

She was acting in the media area, more with respect to TV than in any relation to art...British photography in the 1970s and '80s was...dealing with still, isolated, discrete pictures meant for exhibition. Fay...doesn't seem to have thought entirely of composed static imagery. I associate her glances aside and shots of stones, structures, and dead sheep with TV journey photography...in passing...her's is a landscape of surprises...She sees the Ridgeway as a land to be traversed...Her pictures look as if they are records of a campaign: hard going with debris all around and the promise of bad weather. It is not like the Bawden vision of England, a

⁴⁹⁷ S. Gooden, *The Rural Ideal and the English Countryside, 1945-2000*, 2008, np

⁴⁹⁸ British Film Institute (BFI) Screen Online, the definitive guide to Britain's film and TV history <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/tv/id/445256/index.html>

⁴⁹⁹ In Anthony Clark's guide to *The Survivors*, he commented on the similar experience shared by both programme creators: Kit Pedlar and Gerry Davis (*The Survivors*), and Terry Nation (*Doomwatch*). Both abandoned their shows when the (same) producer, Terence Dudley intervened with the realistic outcome they had envisaged, by imposing a more positive and therefore less credulous ending.

<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/tv/id/518741/index.html>

⁵⁰⁰ H. Herring, '*The Conservation Society*', pp. 396-97

*worked place pieced together by artisans. Fay's is a much harder and bleaker take on G.B.*⁵⁰¹

Jeffrey's comments pointed to a dark ingredient in Godwin's early work responding to a mediated perception of the landscape such as has been discussed (above), and can certainly be detected in some of her Brandt-like images from *The Ridgeway*, in which some of his drama spills over, (figs 2, 7, 123). Yet they may also have reflected something of her own awareness in terms of the welfare of the land. As the next section will show, photography's response to Britain's emerging environmental awareness was a piecemeal process shaped by wider developments in the visual arts, yet Godwin was representative of a growing consciousness in this field.

Shared Territory

One of many factors that fed into the rise of environmental concerns in British photography was the impact of Land art, and its relationship with the camera. Land art was an international development that started in America and spread, via an increasing network of artists interacting with one another across the breadth of Europe during the late 1960s.⁵⁰² Born partially out of the decade's Cultural Revolution and its rally cry for alternative action, the roots of Land art tapped into a variety of contemporary artistic movements of which conceptualism and sculpture played key roles.⁵⁰³ As Alfrey et al's research has shown, artists revised traditional approaches and attitudes towards the land, by using new techniques and new artforms to reflect contemporary interests, as well as concerns, only part of which included an environmental comment.⁵⁰⁴ Thus on the one hand, David Nash used natural materials, found in situ, to make ecological statements or protests through his dead and live wood sculptures: '*Silver Birch Tripod*' (1975) and '*Ash Dome*' (1977).⁵⁰⁵ Nash's adoption of simple life/work principles recalls aspects of my earlier discussion about Edward Carpenter, and the resurgence of his philosophy reinterpreted through a

⁵⁰¹ I. Jeffrey in correspondence with author, 11.08.11

⁵⁰² N. Alfrey, J. Sleeman, B. Tufnell, '*Introduction*', *Uncommon Ground: Land Art in Britain 1966-1979*, Hayward Publishing, 2013, p.11.

The authors have stated that the term 'Land art' is a catch-all description for a range of associated practices, please note that I have used it for the same purpose in this thesis.

⁵⁰³ Ibid,

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid,

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid, '*Artists: David Nash*', pp.56-7

modern lens in the early '70s.⁵⁰⁶ Whereas Keith Arnatt's series of 'burials' using man-made objects in '*Mirror-lined Pit (grass bottom)*' (1968), or people in '*Liverpool Beach Burial*' (1968), contained a greater degree of ambiguity about his intentions, by toying with perceptions of the earth as a consumer, as well as a victim – possibly.⁵⁰⁷

Alfrey et al have noted that one of the defining features of British Land art was the photographic record kept of artworks, due in part to its transient nature, or to demonstrate relevant moments/aspects of the creative process inspired whilst walking.⁵⁰⁸ Two of the best-known artists in this last instance were Richard Long and Hamish Fulton, whose photographic records were only intended as archival copies of those inspired moments, rather than representing the activity itself. As will be noted in this section, these new positions raised questions about the practical differences between artists and landscape photographers. In many ways, Long's interventionist stance was easier to defend as he made and left marks, or structures, as part of his journey, beginning with '*A Line Made By Walking*' (Dec'67); a piece of work that represented the physical condition of his journey 'going "nowhere"'.⁵⁰⁹ Fulton, on the other hand, chose only to record his walks by condensing the experience into a single photograph combined with text, such as '*France On The Horizon – 21 Miles Across the Channel / A One Day 50 Mile Walk By Way Of The White Cliffs Of Dover / England Summer 1975*'. In this lyrical image of the sea cupped by a well-trodden landscape, and topped with a distant – foreign – land, the accompanying words induce an equally studied response by intimating the long history of this divided landmass united under the same sky. This, and other examples of Fulton's photography of the British landscape invite obvious comparisons with Godwin's images, particularly those from the same region, as well as her motives (previously discussed) as a walker/photographer.⁵¹⁰ The example of '*Shakespeare Cliff*' (1986), which is discussed for environmental purposes towards the end of this chapter, is also considered for its links to the continent as well as its historical importance as a beacon for the nation, (fig 145). According to Gerry Badger, the cross-fertilisation of ideas

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid, '*Themes and Contexts: Back to the Land*', p.70

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid, '*Artists: Keith Arnatt*' pp.16-7

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid, '*Processes and Materials: Walking*', p.95-7

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, R. Long, '*Processes and Materials: Walking*', p.95

⁵¹⁰ See Chapter One, p.47

that existed between Long and Fulton, and landscape photographers presented a way forward to Thomas Joshua Cooper's practice, at a point when the Minor White/Stieglitzian philosophy had lost its credibility in British photography in the latter half of the '70s.⁵¹¹

The increased use of the camera in fine art practices led to a blurring of boundaries between artists and photographers, which produced a range of consequences for both camps. To the latter's advantage, it led to greater public exposure for those working in landscape photography such as Godwin, Blakemore, Cooper, Hill and Moore. In group exhibitions they were given the same artistic status as Long, Fulton, Sharon Kivland, Andy Goldsworthy and David Nash in international exhibitions like *Photography as Medium* (1980-6), or regional ones, for example *Presences of Nature: Words and Images of the Lake District*, Carlisle Museum and Art Gallery (1982).⁵¹² Furthermore artists using a camera were similarly challenged by the residual prejudices of photography's traditions and conventions, such as the turn to colour. As Alfrey et al have noted Andy Goldsworthy was charged with operating '*a merely decorative practice*' when during the late '70s, he elected to document his work in colour, which recalls the experience of Paul Graham and Martin Parr.⁵¹³ Resistance to change ran deep on this particular issue for a number of reasons including: aesthetic considerations as well as a range of cultural developments, all of which will be examined in the next chapter.

On the other hand, some of the more contentious issues and debates that rose out of the shared territory were those largely established during the '70s, and were heavily weighted against photography. It was during this period that photographers were most fiercely engaged with the struggle to establish artistic recognition and financial sponsorship for their work at institutional level. Commenting on the meagre resources allocated to photography – in comparison with the American system, Barry lane recalled that following a series of policy changes, in the mid-80s, Arts Council

⁵¹¹ G. Badger, *The Pleasures of Good Photography*, Aperture Foundation, 2010p.149

⁵¹² *Photography as Medium*, The British Council 1980-6, travelling exhibition, and catalogue for *Presences of Nature: Words and Images of the Lake District*, edited by Neil Hanson, Carlisle Museums and Art Gallery, 1982

⁵¹³ Ibid

funding was further reduced, or re-directed, and photographers bore the brunt of it, he stated,

*...our photography committee deliberately tried to have a broad view of it all. We supported conceptual artists, people like Roger Palmer, Hamish Fulton...and people from mainstream art. But I think the photography world just saw their resources shrinking, being taken over...it meant their corner was shrinking away, and that's where a lot of the anger came from, it had taken us a hell of a fight to get the tiny amount we had, out of the Arts Dept, and out of the Arts Council generally, and suddenly it was all being taken away again.*⁵¹⁴

The root cause of the photographers' resentment, regarding the pervasive question of artistic status, was still evident in various debates at the close of the '80s. A prime example of this can be gleaned from a number of essays in *Through the Looking Glass: Photographic Art in Britain 1945 – 1989* (1989). Whilst it was generally agreed by the authors that many hard fought gains had been achieved during this period, it seems fair to comment that they were mainly acknowledged with a list of the ongoing failures. Thus Colin Osman began by casting his recognition of photography's current successes in the long shadow of the Arts Council's rather snippy rejection some thirty years earlier, simply stating it was '*not interested in photography*'.⁵¹⁵ In Gerry Badger's brief history of the period, he balanced the '*incalculable strides...to find a proper identity*' with the gloomier verdict that '*certain factors remain depressingly the same*'.⁵¹⁶ A view that was echoed, yet slightly alleviated, by Peter Turner who in his examination of '*photography's dilemma of identities*' concluded that despite the '*antagonism and uncertainty over definitions [still being] rife*', '*the photographer*' would always manage to triumph in '*the essential stuff of life*'.⁵¹⁷

On a final note about this particular debate, the example of Keith Arnatt provides an interesting footnote to this section. Although borders may have been blurred between

⁵¹⁴ See catalogues for *Presences of Nature: Words and Images of the Lake District*, edited by Neil Hanson, Carlisle Museums and Art Gallery, 1982

Barry Lane, Interview with author, 11.03.10

⁵¹⁵ C. Osman, '*Foreword*', Gerry Badger and John Benton-Harris, *Through The Looking Glass: Photographic Art in Britain 1945 – 1989*, Barbican Art Gallery, London, 1989, p.16

⁵¹⁶ Ibid, G. Badger, '*Through The Looking Glass: Photographic Art in Britain 1945 – 1989*' pp.33-4

⁵¹⁷ Ibid, P. Turner, '*Newsreel*', pp.66 and 70

some fine art and photographic practices, there clearly remained a dividing line, and his career switch from camera-based artist to photographer demonstrated the significant gulf that lay between the two positions during the mid-70s. As Ian Walker has observed, prior to this point Arnatt's conceptual practice was close to exhaustion, and the move to photography reinvigorated his creative flow as he engaged more fully with the camera's potential for artistic manipulation.⁵¹⁸ From a practical perspective, John Stathatos has noted that Arnatt's move exposed some of the hubris that existed in the distinctions maintained between fine art and photography at an institutional level, in particular, the ensuing desertion of his previous sponsors – The Tate, who no longer collected his work based on his new status as a photographer.⁵¹⁹ As mentioned in Chapter One, in 1982 Arnatt took The Tate to task with his article '*Sausages and Food*', by criticising their position of not collecting photography made by photographers, but actively collecting those produced by artists.⁵²⁰ He compared it with the equally tenuous example of making a distinction between sausages and food, pointing out that neither assertion could be rationally sustained.⁵²¹ His article referred at some length to Hamish Fulton's practice, described by The Tate as occupying '*a sculptural position*', whereas Arnatt suggested it demonstrated '*a rather conventional photographic concern*', which makes an interesting connection with my earlier discussion about Fulton and Godwin's converging aims in the approach to their work.⁵²²

Photography's changing responses to Environmental matters

In 1975, an exhibition at the V&A went part-way to recognise some aspects of the deepening ecological crisis with its exhibition: *The Land: Twentieth Century Landscape Photographs*.⁵²³ The show contained two hundred images, but was heavily weighted with the work of American photographers, so although it celebrated the art of landscape, a greater emphasis was allocated to their attitudes towards

⁵¹⁸ I. Walker, '*Between Seeing and Knowing: Two Artists*', *Keith Arnatt: Rubbish and Recollections*, Oriel Mostyn, Llandudno and The Photographers' Gallery, 1989 p.19

⁵¹⁹ J. Stathatos, '*KEITH ARNATT: Rubbish and Recollections*' 1989
http://www.stathatos.net/pages/keith_arnatt.html

⁵²⁰ See Chapter One, p.55, f/n 62

⁵²¹ K. Arnatt, '*Sausages and Food*', 'The Tate's Policy Towards Photography', *Creative Camera*, p.700

⁵²² Ibid, p.700

⁵²³ *The Land: Twentieth Century Landscape Photographs – selected by Bill Brandt*, Mark Howarth-Booth Curator, The Victorian & Albert Museum, Dec 75–Feb 15.1976

environmental concerns.⁵²⁴ That focus was borne out by Mark Haworth-Booth's *Introduction* to the book: *The Land*. Here, he referred to the film that inspired the title – Robert Flaherty's documentary: *The Land* (1942), as 'a brilliant attempt to reconcile the acute conflicts surrounding land use during the Dustbowl era of the United States.'⁵²⁵ This period of American history was also documented most memorably by the images of Gordon Parks, Dorothea Lange, and Walker Evans work on the Farm Security Association (FSA) project. And it was Lange's arresting image of an abandoned homestead set in a great wave of sterile soil: '*Power Farming displaces tenants, Tractored Out*', *Childress County*', Texas (1938) that Haworth-Booth cited together with Margaret Bourke-White's semi-abstract image of '*Contour Ploughing*' Walsh, Colorado (1954) to exemplify the man-made disaster, (fig 112, 113).⁵²⁶ The two images were presented almost in the form of a diptych, the former as '*part of the problem*' and the latter is '*part of the solution*', yet it had little to do with Britain's current rural condition.⁵²⁷

In fact it was Roy Strong's contribution in the *Preface* that acknowledged the stark realities of Britain's environmental crisis.⁵²⁸ His contribution began with a declaration of his own '*preconceived*' and '*romantic*' view of the landscape shaped by the potency of the British literary tradition – here he informed the reader that '*the picturesque voyagers of Kilvert's Diary*', was combined with a national desire to see this way, adding: '*...A camera in my hands would unashamedly do the same.*'⁵²⁹ Yet he finished on a more contemporary note by admitting his response was a screen to the realities of the times. And his closing reflections bleakly echoed those voiced earlier by Betjeman, suggesting that with the benefit of technology – the aerial perspective – reality had finally replaced the romantic descriptions of landscape hitherto offered by the Arts: '*The camera's lens...has pleaded the cause of*

⁵²⁴ See 'Bill Brandt and the V&A' website: '*The exhibition, shown in 1975...including a strong showing of Americans...*'

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/b/bill-brandt-and-the-v-and-a/>

⁵²⁵ M. Haworth-Booth (Ed), *The Land: Twentieth Century Landscape Photographs – selected by Bill Brandt*, Gordon Fraser Gallery Ltd, 1975, p.9

⁵²⁶ Ibid

⁵²⁷ Ibid, p.9

⁵²⁸ R. Strong, '*The Land*', p.7

⁵²⁹ Ibid

*conservation, eroded soil, dead fish floating in the polluted waters...So often they seem symbols in this savage age, of a hope for ever betrayed.*⁵³⁰

The book, consisted of three essays, five poems, and forty-eight photographic plates, and had an international cast of contributors, including Godwin's *Barbary Castle Clump* (1974), (fig 114). The text, which predominantly focussed on nature, the cosmos and environmental thinking, was a prelude to the images. The essays were intermittently supported by Native American and/or Eastern philosophy, or in the case of Aaron Scharf's '*Gospel of the Land*', a negotiation with Ruskin's '*Modern Painters*' (1843-60), and all were interweaved with comments about the ongoing debate about photography as art. The text placed the V&A in a progressive light institutionally, whilst revealing some of the preoccupations of photography and the cultural trends shaping Britain at this time. Each contribution offered a different viewpoint on one, or a number of the themes recalling many of the figures I have already discussed in this chapter, such as Rachel Carson and her allusions to the interconnectedness of all life on earth, also E.F. Schumacher's investigations of environmental thinking via Buddhist teachings. Lastly, Aaron Scharf's essay presented a challenging argument that set out to celebrate landscape photography as an art form, and show its unique value above other disciplines in the Arts – in terms of the current environmental discourse. Manoeuvring his way through Ruskin's stated prejudices about photography, and his distrust of unpopulated landscapes as having no value for mankind, Scharf drew heavily on the moral arguments of '*Modern Painters*' (1843-60), in order to present the largely unpopulated representations of wilderness in *The Land* as paradigms of nature, preserved for the benefit of the human race as, '*...a great teacher of the kind of planetary modesty man most needs if his human order is to survive.*'⁵³¹ On the other hand, it might also be understood as a necessary defence against the charges of dewy-eyed romanticism.

Godwin's selection for the exhibition was a clear affirmation of her rising status in Britain's expanding photographic community, and in addition, it was remarkably timely in terms of her desire to work with Ted Hughes. The coincidence (?) of their appearing in the same exhibition (the only British poet to be featured) has to be

⁵³⁰ Ibid

⁵³¹ A. Scharf, '*The Gospel of Landscape*', '*The Land*', p.22

looked at as another potential factor to have drawn him back to resurrecting '*Remains of Elmet*'.⁵³² Furthermore, and quite importantly for the current discussion, although neither had a public profile in the environmental debate at that time, it was clearly deemed appropriate to show them as sympathetic to its aims. In particular Hughes' poem: '*Revenge Fable*', which presented a more emphatic message communicating the environmental agenda of the era. In his allegory of human scorn for nature, the violence, arrogance and madness of his protagonist, finally brings about his own destruction, thus providing a suitably apocalyptic message for the occasion. On the other hand, Godwin's image: '*Ridgeway, Barbary Castle Clump*' 1974, (one of a series taken for her publication) was more concerned with aesthetics. It presented a different perspective from the summertime views used in the walkers' guide, and was often cited by her as a typical example of her fieldwork practice in terms of repetitive visits to achieve an anticipated effect.⁵³³ Taken in the early spring and without the distraction of herd animals, she focussed more self-consciously on the 'undressed' structure of the trees along with the shadows they cast. The result is a sparer composition, focussing on the formal aspects of line, proportion, texture and tone, and as Ian Jeffery observed, '*notable for its stance – she had picked on the spot from which the gaps between the trees seemed to expand and contract almost systematically.*'⁵³⁴

Beech clumps were a familiar feature in parts of the British lowlands from the mid-eighteenth century. They had been developed as part of Capability Brown's repertoire of 'eye-catchers', such as the Nile Clumps on Salisbury Plain, at the Duke of Queensbury's estate, Amesbury Park.⁵³⁵ Artists, and subsequently photographers, have long been drawn to reproduce them as part of a range of natural or manmade features such as haystacks, stones or clouds.⁵³⁶ Some views, such as the photographer,

⁵³² T. Hughes '*Revenge Fable*', *The Land*, p.31

⁵³³ Godwin discussed this image and her technique in the article: (no author), '*See how photographers work*', *You and Your Camera*, Feb 1980, 'Newspaper Reviews' FGA, BL

⁵³⁴ I. Jeffery, in correspondence to author, 02.09.11. My thanks to Ian Jeffery for his information on this section in particular

⁵³⁵ B. Lennon, '*Burlington, Brown and Bill: The Landscaping at Tottenham Park and Savernake Forest in Eighteenth Century*', *Garden History*, 2011, pp.24-5
[http://www.academia.edu/3528675/Burlington Brown and Bill The Landscaping of Tottenham Park and Savernake Forest in Eighteenth Century](http://www.academia.edu/3528675/Burlington_Brown_and_Bill_The_Landscaping_of_Tottenham_Park_and_Savernake_Forest_in_Eighteenth_Century)

⁵³⁶ P. Hagerty, *The Continuity of Landscape Representation: The Photography of Edward Chambré Hardman (1898-1988)*, May 1999, p114
<http://www.arklo.com/ech.htm>

Henry Taunt's documentary image of '*Wittenham clumps*' (1912) were taken predominantly for commercial/tourist purposes, in this case it was a working landscape complete with its field of vegetation, labourer and shed all in a line, not as a prelude to the landmark of the clump, but as part of the general vista, (fig 115). As Peter Hagerty's work has shown, other photographers like Frank Meadow Sutcliffe and Edward Chambré Hardman followed a more creative endeavour, which also involved a dedicated programme of waiting at locations, or making a series of return trips to achieve the desired results.⁵³⁷ Hagerty described '*The Copse*' (1935) as '*the maturation of Chambré Hardman's landscape photography*' – not just for its formal components or abstract composition but also because of his '*perseverance*', (fig 116).⁵³⁸

Probably the best-known figure attracted to the same subject had been the painter Paul Nash (1889-1946), who created many versions of '*Wittenham clumps*' from 1912 to his more concentrated period in the first half of the 1940s (figs 117,118).⁵³⁹ He painted the scene in different seasons, by day and by night, and from a variety of distances energised by the endless inspiration they afforded his abiding interest in the natural cycle, and its links to ancient mysticism: '*Since 1912 the clumps had represented a kind of target for him, and had signified mystery and the unknown.*'⁵⁴⁰ Indeed Godwin spoke of her interest in Nash's work particularly during her youth, and although stating that his paintings did not consciously figure in her *Ridgeway* series, she agreed that '*anything you've looked at is a subconscious influence in your work later on.*'⁵⁴¹ As already discussed in Chapter One, the strongest influence behind her images of *Barbury Castle* had probably been Brandt, and the subject matter would not have been lost on him as the accredited selector of the show. Also mentioned was the fact that his heavily contrasted image from 1948, (see fig 8) focussed on the elemental and unknown, becoming a work of fiction without reference to any practical purpose, such as a windbreak or animal shelter.

⁵³⁷ Ibid, p. 41 and p.114

⁵³⁸ Ibid, p.114 and f/n 54

⁵³⁹ A. Causey, *Paul Nash*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980, Causey discussed the gradual development of Nash's esoteric interests with the history of the landscape surrounding the clumps pp.28-34, 328-35

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid, p.235

⁵⁴¹ F. Godwin, interview with Nicholas Sinclair, for the *Saxon Shore Way* exhibition at Photogallery, St Leonards-on-Sea, 1983, audio cassette recording, GFA

Godwin's image was certainly appropriate for particular themes of the publication of *'The Land'*, such as an appreciation of nature, but more obviously the debate concerning photography's artistic status. In that context, many of the photographs offer little visual evidence to the viewer about the exact nature of their connection to some of the environmental issues raised in the text. A proportion of them fell into the Subjektive Fotografie movement from the 1940s-50s, popularised by Otto Steinert, in which the principle aim was an aestheticising of the subject beyond its physical or socio-cultural meaning.⁵⁴² There is a strong graphic quality to some of these landscapes such as Ray Moore's *'Rockface'* (1965), in which the scored and sectioned stonework was able to retain its mysteries regarding scale, location, and primarily, its history on the planet, (fig 119). This focus on the formal qualities of the landscape may have explained why one of the contributing authors, environmental scientist, Keith Critchlow made a brief, and possibly ambiguous, reference to the photographs at the end of his essay *Return From Exile*: *'Beautiful photographs may be only the mechanically recorded visions of a sensitive eye yet they remain mute witnesses of this intimate connection that we can make with the land.'*⁵⁴³ On the one hand he suggested a beneficent relationship was clearly available between science/technology and man, in the role of the chronicling artist, yet on the other hand, were his words also signalling the end days of photographers being able to take apolitical and muted images of landscapes?

The mid-70s photographic community was more receptive towards idealised, or transcendental visions of the land, which had all but disintegrated by the turn of the new decade. *'The Land'* exhibition was viewed as a positive event, by progressing photography into mainstream arts establishments. For example, on the fringes, it inspired the first in a new series of seminars at the newly reformed Half Moon Photography Workshop organised to coincide with the exhibition. The seminar entitled: *'Minor White & Landscapes'* was led by Tom Picton, who was billed *'...[to] look at the work, ideas and influence of Minor White in particular and landscape photography in general...'*⁵⁴⁴ Also *Creative Camera* broke with a tradition of not giving editorial reviews by enthusiastically encouraging their readers to go and

⁵⁴² I. Jeffrey, in correspondence to author, 02.09.11

⁵⁴³ K. Critchlow, *'Return From Exile'*, *'The Land'*, p.30

⁵⁴⁴ Extract from *'News/Information'* section of *Bellows 1, Formerly Co-Optic News Letter, October 1975*, courtesy of Stephen Weiss, Co-Optic Archive

see it as ‘*one of the best exhibitions of photography originating from Britain.*’⁵⁴⁵ On the wider international stage, the exhibition was a resounding success because, on the face of it, the images confirmed stereotypical world-opinions of England as a picturesque little country with its quaint patchwork field system in the lowlands, exemplified in: J.K. St Joseph’s ‘*Church Stretton Valley, Salop*’ (1947) pl.25, and the remote and rugged, romantic isles of the Highlands in: Paul Strand’s ‘*Tir A’Mhurain, South Uist, Hebrides*’ (1954), (figs 120,121).

The Crisis of British Landscape Photography (‘78 – mid-80s)

Signs of tension in the balance between landscape photography as an art form, and as an environmentally informed document began to manifest towards the end of the ‘70s. As Gerry Badger has noted, Minor White’s influence in Britain had already extended beyond its natural time, even before his death in 1976, with American photographers already turning ‘*a dry-eyed concentration upon the man-altered rather than the unsullied landscape.*’⁵⁴⁶ Some recognition of these events can be discerned in *Perspectives on Landscape* (1978), the fifth publication in the Arts Council’s ‘*Image*’ series, which featured the work of eleven recipients of Arts Council awards, including a series of Godwin’s vast, open landscapes, as referred to by Ian Jeffrey in the previous chapter, (figs 3,12,32,122).⁵⁴⁷ Although Bill Gaskin’s ‘*Introduction*’ presented a more direct case for the national debate on environmental issues than was offered in *The Land*, its tone was also more defensive, which suggested that the mainly aesthetic content of the images required further justification. Part of his argument for photography was to extricate the camera from its complicit role as a tourist accessory to further devour the country’s beauty spots, by pressing its case as a creative medium capable of conserving and conveying images that embodied the aura of the unspoiled land, particularly to viewers of a sensitive nature:

On a superficial level it is a pictorial means of bringing the landscape to the city; on a more personal level, it reflects an unconscious concern for one’s origins

⁵⁴⁵ C. Osman ‘*Do we need Critics?*’ by, *Creative Camera*, February 1976, no.140, p.39.

⁵⁴⁶ G. Badger, *The Pleasures of Good Photography*, p.146 In addition to the ‘New Topographics’ style, Badger also quoted ‘the rise of post-modernism and colour’ as other, ‘contributory factors’ to the move away from White’s approach.

⁵⁴⁷ The other photographers were: Gerry Badger, Ken Baird, Michael Blake, John Blakemore, Thomas Joshua Cooper, John A Davies, Donald Jackson, Paul Joyce, Chris Locke and Simon Marsden

*and place in the world. To find oneself in a wholly natural and wild situation is to return momentarily to the primeval state – to glimpse a perspective of the ‘self’ in the natural paradise.*⁵⁴⁸

Gaskin legitimised the metaphysical properties of the images with the nature writings of Thoreau and Emerson, and attributed the eleven photographers’ with the same ‘*heightened awareness to nature through first hand experience*’.⁵⁴⁹ This explanation continued to support the American approach to the genre, in particular the Trent school where Gaskin, John Blakemore and Thomas Joshua Cooper had taught, or were still teaching.

Another aspect of the defensive emphasis in Gaskin’s *Introduction* included a proviso in his presentation of the work. Here, he stated: ‘*In most cases, the images were made within the last three or four years and represent the photographer’s thoughts and ideas at that point in time; many will change or deepen their involvement with nature in the future.*’⁵⁵⁰ It was a curious comment, possibly revealing his awareness of the emerging cracks within an increasingly vocal photographic community monitoring the work of their peers, and it was also prescient in terms of John Davies and John Blakemore, who both made quite dramatic changes in their practices during the early ‘80s, the former by engaging more directly with the man-made/affected landscape, and the latter by moving into still life. With Godwin, signs of human industry had always been present in her images, although often historical, such as the ancient marker stones, or dry stonewalls of British field systems. However in images such as ‘*Roman Camp, Trawsfydd 2*’, evidence of modern life included the intrusive path of the pylons and less picturesque metal stock fencing criss-crossing the land, (fig 122).

In 1983, the photographic journal, *TEN:8* with its remit to ‘...to stimulate debates about the implications of photography...’ devoted an entire issue to an examination of the British landscape, from its earliest representation through to the 1970s.⁵⁵¹ In Paul Lewis’ article: ‘*Where the Wild Things Went*’ he targeted the Trent school in

⁵⁴⁸ B. Gaskin, *Perspectives on Landscape, British Image 5*, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978, p.7-9

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid, pp.7-8

⁵⁵⁰ B.Gaskin, *Perspectives on Landscape, p.9*

⁵⁵¹ *Ten.8: a Critical Decade* in the notes from the conference: *Some of ‘What Happened Here...’*
http://www.typeandline.com/openstudio.info/news/some_of_what.pdf

particular, for its adoption of the West Coast American style.⁵⁵² In addition, he questioned the Arts Council's motives for having funded these projects through the example of *Perspectives on Landscape*, together with artists using cameras, rather than give financial assistance to photographers investigating new ideas relevant to the times. Lewis raised a number of valid points about the poetic/escapist design intrinsic to many of the works, by posing the question: 'Who provided the visual equivalent to Blythe's *Akenfield*?' and drew contrasts with the sober environmental realities revealed in the exhibition: *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape*, Rochester, New York in 1975.⁵⁵³ Yet, from a current day perspective, these, and other observations were largely overshadowed by the relentless, and often vituperative, assault that gave more attention to an axe-grinding exercise, rather than the knowledge and declared aim underpinning his article.

In many ways Lewis' reference to the *New Topographic* photographers was largely inappropriate to the period under discussion. For as Britt Salversen has pointed out, one of the most significant features of the original exhibition was its long-term (rather than immediate) impact on both European as well as American photographers regarding 'human construction and consumption on the American landscape.'⁵⁵⁴ Yet, as Salversen, and many others, have also established the timing of the show was pivotal in terms of flagging changing attitudes towards the representation of landscape in the Western world – from pristine wildernesses to sites evidencing the progressive commodification of the landscape. She also noted how the work of the *New Topographic* photographers was wired into a range of other cultural developments, as well as photography, already taking place in post-war America particularly in academia and fine art practices.⁵⁵⁵ In the latter case, she referred to the element of banality in Andy Warhol's serial imagery, and the subtle irony that threaded its way through Ed Ruscha's photo-based books that helped feed the aesthetics and themes

⁵⁵² P. Lewis, 'Where The Wild Things Went', 'Rural Myths', *TEN.8*, Quarterly Photographic Journal, No.12, 1983, Misc. Publications, FGA, BL, pp.32-4

⁵⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁵⁴ B. Salversen, 'New Topographics', *New Topographics: Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Bernd and Hill Becher, Joe Deal, Frank Gohlke, Nicholas Nixon, John Schott, Stephen shore, Henry Wessel, Jr*, Steidl Publishers and Center for Creative photography in cooperation with George Eastman House, Third Edition, 2013, p.12

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid, see Salversen's discussion starting: 'Beyond the museum and gallery context' regarding the expansion of human geography to encompass a range of other disciplines connected to landscape usage under Carl Sauer, and later John Brinkerhoff Jackson pp. 20-2

found in the *New Topographic* images, with some of the photographers acknowledging Ruscha's work as an inspiration to their approach.⁵⁵⁶

Trademarks of the dispassionate glances of the *New Topographic* photographers was less evident in the work of British landscape photography until the early '80s.⁵⁵⁷ Although interestingly, Eugenie Shinkle's essay has recently drawn parallels between their work, and that of the British photographer, John Meyers' (significantly a long-term colleague of Paul Lewis), whose equally deadpan delivery of his local landscape in the West Midlands, during its expansion of the suburbs, began in 1972 and lasted for a seven year period.⁵⁵⁸ Shinkle argued that the agents for change regarding new perspectives of landscape were not '*uniquely American*' stating, '*As Myers remarks, there was "something in the air" and that "[he] was part of an emergent English photographic culture that was staking out its own identity.*'⁵⁵⁹ Many photographers coming up through the '80s have cited the influence of the *New Topographics* (as well as other emerging figures, such as William Eggleston), and modified their techniques to suit the fast shifting dynamics of the British scene, this included Jem Southam and Paul Graham. With particular reference to *A1 – The Great North Road* (1981-2), and *Beyond Caring* (1984-5), the latter recently stated, '*What I adapted was an amalgam of Eggleston and Robert Adams, and put that together with the classic British obsession with Social Critique. It became my own mash-up, if you will.*'⁵⁶⁰ Both worked at the Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol during the late 70s, early 80s, and Graham recalled how he and Southam persuaded the Exhibition Organiser, Lewis Biggs, '*into putting on a show there...*' – albeit at a reduced scale, entitled: '*New Topographics: Photographs by Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, and Joe Deal*' (1981-2), attracting and affecting attitudes of other established and budding photographers of the period to the 'new' aesthetic.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, '*Learning from Las Vegas and Ed Ruscha: ugly and ordinary*' pp.23-9, Also K. Dennis, *Landscape and the West: Irony and Critique in New Topographic Photography*, Paper Presented at the Forum UNESCO University Heritage 10th Int'l Seminar "Cultural Landscapes in the C21st" N/upon-Tyne, April 11-16, 2005, <http://www.americansuburbx.com/go/new-topographics>

⁵⁵⁷ B Salversen, '*New Topographics*', p.57

⁵⁵⁸ E. Shinkle, '*Something in the Air: The Landscape Photography of John Myers*', John Myers, Middle England, Ikon Gallery, 2011, p.12

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid, p.12

⁵⁶⁰ P. Graham, *INTERVIEW: "Paul Graham with Richard Woodward" (2007)* <http://www.americansuburbx.com/2010/07/interview-paul-graham-with-richard.html>

⁵⁶¹ P. Graham '*Paul Graham interviewed by Shirley Read*', British Library Sound Archive, 28.12.07, Track 1, 01.40.00.

Keith Arnatt was another photographer who actively responded to the restrained style of the *New Topographics* during the first half of the '80s. John Stathatos noted that Arnatt's switch to a larger format camera in *Abandoned Sites* (1980), *A.O.N.B.* (1982-84) and *The Forest* (1985-86) enabled him to create '...a more edgy series of black and white landscapes...[creating] commentaries on the concept of the sublime...a landscape marked by detritus, rubbish, and the banal or incongruous signs of commonplace human presence.'⁵⁶² Although it should also be stated that others have linked Arnatt's 5 x 4 camera work to that of earlier photographers, such as David Hurn who suggested it could have been 'a kind of homage to Walker Evans', and Ian Walker who described it in the 'topographical tradition of...Frith and Atget'⁵⁶³ Godwin also participated in *The Forest* commission – a collaborative scheme organised by the Forestry Commission and the Arnolfini Gallery, in which Arnatt trained a bleak eye on its trashed and discarded patches, visually excited by the sharper artistic possibilities they offered in terms of their interaction with the transitory light and lie of the land.⁵⁶⁴ Whereas she delved into the forest's long history, by generally celebrating its time-honoured range of human interventions in both the manmade and natural landscape through a combination of images, interviews and poems.⁵⁶⁵ In this instance there was little to link the work of the two photographers, however, their ideas did occupy similar territory in later projects, namely the colour close-ups, and I will be returning to this matter in the next chapter.

Thus for the purposes of this thesis, the greater significance of Lewis' article in *Ten:8* – along with much of that edition, was the evidence it provided for the divisions that opened up due to a plurality of interests materialising, as the push towards

For other examples of photographers responding to the 'New Topographic' approach see: 'Roger Palmer', 'Artists', in N. Alfrey et al's, *Uncommon Ground*, pp.58-9 'Patrick Shanahan: *Esperantis*, 06.07-28.08.2004', Artist Interview by Bernadette Buckley for the John Hansard Gallery, <http://www.hansardgallery.org.uk/event-detail/105-patrick-shanahan-esperantis/> And John Kemp in 'Interviews with the photographers', Impressions Gallery, 'Exhibitions Past': '40th Anniversary Exhibition: Roads to Wigan Pier', Group exhibition 28th Sep - 05th Jan 2013 <http://www.impressions-gallery.com/exhibitions/exhibition.php?id=50>

⁵⁶² J. Stathatos, *Keith Arnatt: Rubbish and Recollections*,

http://www.stathatos.net/pages/keith_arnatt.html

⁵⁶³ D. Hurn, 'David Hurn, Keith Arnatt, Photographer', *I'm a Real Photographer, Keith Arnatt Photographs 1974-2002*, Chris Boot in association with The Photographers' Gallery, 2007, p.9

I. Walker, 'Between Seeing and Knowing', p.18

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid – I. Walker, pp.18-9

⁵⁶⁵ See F. Godwin, with an introduction by Edna Healey, *The Secret Forest of Dean*, Redcliffe Press and Arnolfini Gallery in collaboration with the Forestry Commission, 1986

photography's creative potential on diminishing resources continued. In recent times, Paul Graham has spoken about this divisive atmosphere in connection with his project: '*Troubled Land*', '*...back then people said, "you're crossing a line: mixing up reportage and landscape; it's all about you as an artist and the issue, the place."* There was a very hard critique of it.'

⁵⁶⁶

In addition, some of Bill Gaskin's predictions in respect of changing attitudes/photographic practices had either been implemented, or were provoked by it.⁵⁶⁷ Davies moved into urban landscapes in 1981, citing contemporary considerations: '*Margaret Thatcher was in power, it was a reaction to the political situation of the days that led me to become dissatisfied with making images that were vehicles of escape.*'⁵⁶⁸ Whereas John Blakemore claimed he was personally affected by Lewis' comments, which confirmed growing self-doubts about his previous approach to landscape:

It was very influential on me because it brought to a point a lot of things I'd been thinking about in my landscape work. One was becoming much more aware of the deleterious effect of one's species on the landscape, and I really felt I couldn't justify any longer to myself any landscape picture that appeared to be idyllic – about a perfect landscape...

⁵⁶⁹

On a slightly lighter note he quipped: '*It was quite funny because I had a conversation with Fay about it, and she had cancelled her subscription – I didn't have one, but I took one out!*'⁵⁷⁰

As Blakemore's comment implied, an annotated copy of Lewis' article in Godwin's archive revealed both her anger and disagreement with many of his accusations. Its main force had been aimed at a number of her colleagues, who were satirised

⁵⁶⁶ A. Schuman '*The Knight's Move*' – *In Conversation with Paul Graham*, *Seesaw* online photography magazine, 2010, (np) <http://www.seesawmagazine.com/paulgrahaminterview/paulgrahaminterview.html>

⁵⁶⁷ B. Gaskin, *Perspectives on Landscape*, p.48

⁵⁶⁸ G.N. Gee, *The Representation of the Northern City in the Photography of John Davies (1981–2003)*, *Visual Culture in Britain*, 2010, p.330 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14714787.2010.514749>

⁵⁶⁹ J. Blakemore Interview with author, 18.06.10

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid

throughout as a religious sect gathered around ‘*the prophet Minor White*’, which recalls Peter Goldfield’s comments regarding the seductive nature of White’s approach.⁵⁷¹ Yet Lewis’ use of Godwin’s image ‘*Roman Camp, Trawsfydd 2*’, to demonstrate her ‘*unashamedly romantic*’ style, clearly jarred with the collective charge of ‘...*failing to notice that the land was owned, worked and constantly reshaped*.’⁵⁷² On the other hand, although highlighting the comment about Ronald Blythe’s *Akenfield*, she added no comment. Possibly this reference struck a chord, considering her long acquaintance with the author, and their various conversations regarding a possible collaboration.

The Established Turning Point

The Saxon Shore Way (1983) was Godwin’s fourth book about a specific route, in which she set out to give a visual impression to the reader of how it felt to be walking through the landscape. She once described it as ‘*The most threatening work I ever did...the north Kent coast, an area rife with unemployment and vandalism*’, whereas, Sillitoe summarised it in more sensory terms as ‘...*a footpath of visual and olfactory contrasts*.’⁵⁷³ As stated at the beginning of this chapter, there was a significant difference between its physical environment, and those walkers’ books that preceded it hinting that Godwin’s intentions had been to show a more threatened landscape. Earlier publications had focussed on more remote, rural and historically less inhabited areas than this heavily used corner of the British Isles. And whereas that factor had encouraged a more theatrical reading of the occasional industrial site, such as Didcot Power Station looming like ‘*The Emerald City*’ in *The Ridgeway*, or abandoned cottages looking like an old Western film-set in Tanygrisau in the *Drovers’ Roads of Wales*, less was left to the imagination in the scenes of degradation in *The Saxon Shore Way*, particularly along the first leg of the walk, (figs 123, 124).⁵⁷⁴ This view was reflected in Godwin’s discussion during an interview with Nicholas Sinclair: ‘*The 141 miles walk around the Kent coast has taken me through some of the most varied*

⁵⁷¹ P. Lewis, ‘*Where The Wild Things Went*’, p.33

⁵⁷² Ibid p.33

⁵⁷³ S. Townsend, ‘*The Lure of the Land*’, ‘*Women’s Art*’, A women Artists Slide Library Publication No.52, May/June 1993, p.9

A. Sillitoe, interview with Carrie Britton, *The Saxon Shore Way* exhibition, Folkstone Arts Centre, April, 1986, in ‘*The Ghosts of Britain*’, Independent documentary by Goldsmith College student, Carrie Britton on Fay Godwin’s landscape work as part of a British tradition. Video cassette recording, GFA

⁵⁷⁴ *The Ridgeway*, p171, *The Drovers Roads of Wales*, pp. 66-7 & *Romney Marsh*, p.152

*landscape that you could imagine in the UK...sleazy rotten heaps...castles, pillboxes defence works of every kind...to more traditional landscape...'*⁵⁷⁵

Godwin's turning point to more overtly environmental observations was also reflected in her choice of co-author for the project. During another interview whilst promoting the book and exhibition, Sillitoe claimed he had first been approached by Godwin's publisher/literary agent, however, it is clear from their correspondence that they had been discussing possibilities for joint projects since at least the mid-70s.⁵⁷⁶ Both had second homes near the Kent/Sussex border and the letters suggest that many (unsuccessful) efforts were made to meet and explore the area together. The only named idea was Dungeness Power Station on Romney Marsh, with Sillitoe writing '*...we'll be in Wittersham...all through the summer, so maybe I'll do a reconnaissance of Dungeness*', which clearly proposed a despoiled landscape, rather than a bucolic one.⁵⁷⁷ Given Godwin's correspondence at the time with J.G. Ballard, and the fictional and non-fictional predictions of an imminent apocalyptic event by Edward Goldsmith et al, it would seem that not only was she pursuing her idea with different authors, but that she was also responding to the wider currents of popular anxiety regarding the rising threat of science and technology in modern society. The letters also suggested that Godwin probably introduced, and drove the collaborative idea, implying great persistence on her part having sensed an interest from him. This can be supported by the fact that most of the Dungeness images were taken during this period 1974-5.⁵⁷⁸

There was a marked difference between Sillitoe and Richard Ingrams, co-author of ***Romney Marsh***, in which personality and different cultural preoccupations played a definitive role in their individual responses to a similar geographical location. This difference was reflected in '*Part One*' of ***Romney Marsh***, where Ingrams referred somewhat lyrically to his starting point in Pett Level: '*...at the foot of a Cliff...past*

⁵⁷⁵ F. Godwin, Interview by Nicholas Sinclair, ***Saxon Shore Way*** exhibition, Photogallery, St Leonards, 1983, audio cassette recording, GFA

⁵⁷⁶ A. Sillitoe, letter to Godwin 16.04.75, BL. Of twenty-nine letters, approximately one third were sent during '75, after which there was no correspondence until their collaborative work began in the early '80s.

A. Sillitoe, interview with Carrie Britton, '***The Ghosts of History***' 1986

⁵⁷⁷ A. Sillitoe, letter to Godwin 16.04.75 and 16.07.75, BL

⁵⁷⁸ A number of the Dungeness images were used in ***Romney Marsh*** (1980)

*the village store...there is a narrow canal which looks as if it is in danger of being stifled by reeds and rushes.*⁵⁷⁹ Whereas Sillitoe's description mid-point of his walk described the 'choking' flora and fauna as a *'Jungle along the path [that] thins and disappears, but otherwise the whole locality is laced with shit and mud, which seems to epitomize this part of the England, at least as far as footpaths go.'*⁵⁸⁰ From Godwin's perspective Ingrams' established credentials with the region, through the *Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust*, and his connections with both John Piper and John Betjeman's work on the region, meant his contribution accorded a loftier, literary bias to the work, delivering practical instructions more as an aside than as a purpose. By contrast, *The Saxon Shore Way* was premised on the opening of a new public footpath (by Kent County Council, 1980), therefore it also prepared the ground for her campaigning phase within the short-term future.

Godwin's rapport with Sillitoe was based on a shared sensibility for an abject yet stimulating landscape, she stated: *'I think that Alan Sillitoe and I saw the same landscape and I know that Ted Hughes and I did.'*⁵⁸¹ Yet, as has already been established, Hughes was the only co-author Godwin worked with in an integrative mode. Sillitoe's response to this subject was: *'it made for a better book, because you get two peoples' vision instead of one.'*⁵⁸² Other factors that drew them together on this project were a shared enthusiasm for walking, map reading, and an interest in the old defence systems scattered along the South coast shores, in one of his earlier letters Sillitoe had described himself as *'a thwarted geographer/traveller really. Maybe all the English are.'*⁵⁸³ From another perspective, they shared similar personality traits, the dogged, determination to succeed in their careers for which they had received no formal training, and exhibiting a scant regard for distant authority. Sillitoe's biographer, Richard Bradford described him as being *'deeply committed to the ideals of freedom and equitability but at the same time he detests the infringement of systems – however benign and altruistic they might claim to be – upon the conscience of the*

⁵⁷⁹ R. Ingrams, *Romney Marsh*, p.15

⁵⁸⁰ A. Sillitoe, *Saxon Shore Way*, p.104

⁵⁸¹ S. Thomas *'Looking for the light'* *Times Educational Supplement*, 10.04.92, p.26, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

⁵⁸² A. Sillitoe, Interview with Carrie Britton, *'The Ghosts of History'* 1986,

⁵⁸³ A. Sillitoe, letter to Godwin, 16.07.75, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL
C.Britton Interview with Alan Sillitoe, *'The Ghosts of History'*

individual.⁵⁸⁴ This attitude became a familiar feature from Sillitoe's regular bristling at the signage during the walk, which was always capitalised in the text (and mostly recited in full), on some occasions it was further embellished with his own thoughts. For example his reaction to a 'Private/Keep Out' notice on a caravan site was: '*they might have added NO HAWKERS OR CIRCULARS. NO COACHES. NO TRIPPERS. NO PROLES. NO CHILDREN. NO COCKNEYS. NO GYPSIES. NO LABOUR VOTERS. NO BLACKS. NO HUNGER MARCHERS.*'⁵⁸⁵ Drawing on my previous examples of Godwin's own dissident attitude to signs and the establishment, clearly there was plenty of scope for them to see and react to the same landscape.

On the other hand, professional interests produced a very tense episode in their relationship at the production stage of *The Saxon Shore Way*, as the sole letter from Godwin to Sillitoe revealed. Acting on a misunderstood comment in one of his letters, and supported by further misinformation from the publishers, she concluded that her images were about to be dropped from the book, or worse, replaced. Her reaction was hostile and resigned to betrayal despite their long-term friendship, and only conceded the possibility of a misunderstanding in her last line, to which Sillitoe painstakingly replied: this was indeed the case.⁵⁸⁶ The relevance of this incident is that it provides yet another example of Godwin's vulnerability as the professional became personal. Firstly, as a freelance photographer attempting to both fund and progress her career, in a genre currently in flux, and still struggling to find recognition as an art form. Secondly, as an equal partner in a collaborative project that she had probably initiated, but most certainly advanced to its current stage. Thirdly, as a woman who had experienced rejection by men, publishing, and men in publishing; fundamentally, she saw herself in terms of her work, therefore to reject her work was to reject her.

Sillitoe's observations in *The Saxon Shore Way* reflected the plight of all walkers on a number of fronts. These included public footpaths obstructed by bulls; pollution in all its seen and unseen manifestations; and missing or obscure signposts.⁵⁸⁷ Together

⁵⁸⁴ R. Bradford, in Alan Sillitoe, *Saturday Night & Sunday Morning*, p.3

⁵⁸⁵ A. Sillitoe, *Saxon Shore Way*, p.83

⁵⁸⁶ F. Godwin, letter to Alan Sillitoe, 04.05.82, BL & A. Sillitoe, letter to Fay Godwin, 07.05.82, 'Literary Correspondence', file, FGA, BL

⁵⁸⁷ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, see for example: pp.50-1 & 96

with Godwin's images of a neglected and partially working landscape, their book enabled a ready link to her later concerns regarding access to a battered but salvageable landscape. The first part of the journey, through the scenery of the Thames estuary, showed it to still be supporting a great variety of human and wildlife activity. Its lengthy, and often murky history stretched from the Roman invasion to recent river usage, whilst sharing limited space with the North Kent Marshes, an established natural habitat. In Sillitoe's text he stated, '*A short cut takes me through an amphitheatre of burned-out motor cars...along a causeway and a series of lagoons...*' a description that blends into Godwin's image: '*Rotting Car, Cliffe Lagoon*' (1981), (fig 125).⁵⁸⁸ The composition of a sinking Mini with tendrils of weed threaded through the bodywork, appeared like a fugitive from Martin Parr's series of jettisoned jalopies in '*Abandoned Morris Minors*', *A Fair Day* (1984), (figs 126).⁵⁸⁹

These images of broken, discarded and static vehicles suggest a rupture, and total antithesis to the more typical celebration of the car in modern Western societies. In the arts, they had been fundamental to the iconography and aims of the Futurist Movement (1909-6) who saw them as new, exciting and dynamic, a symbol of modernism: change, progress and a break with the past, '*...a new beauty...a racing automobile with its bonnet adorned with great tubes like serpents with explosive breath...a roaring motorcar...more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace*.'⁵⁹⁰ Yet, the 'lives' of these depicted cars, clapped-out and going no-where, also represented a rejection of the Futurist Manifesto as symbols of youth, speed and change, exhibiting instead, their metamorphosed state as different objects with which society had not finished. The art historian, Mike Weaver, classified them as '*broken forms*', seeing the steering wheels as metaphors: '*universal markers of time*.'⁵⁹¹ Both he, and Godwin had independently noted the car's altered status to that of an object of public entertainment, with the additional wheel that had been '*cast hoop-la fashion...decorat[ing] the raised bonnet...[rendering it]...wrecked and bedecked at*

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid, p.21

⁵⁸⁹ M. Parr, *A Fair Day*, with a text by Fintan O'Toole, Salem House Publishers, 1984

⁵⁹⁰ F. Marinetti, *The Futurist Manifesto*, Manifesto of Futurism Point 4, 1909
<http://vserver1.cscs.lsa.umich.edu/~crshalizi/T4PM/futurist-manifesto.html>

⁵⁹¹ M. Weaver, *The Photographic Art: Pictorial Traditions in Britain and America*, The Scottish Arts Council and The Herbert Press Ltd, 1986, p.70

*the same time.*⁵⁹² Similarly, Parr's series expanded on their alternative usage to include, hen houses and duck shelters, fence sections, or simply a target for lakeside amusement, (figs 127,128).

Essentially, Godwin and Parr's images of abandoned cars represented a stage in a process that Igor Kopytoff described as '*the cultural biography of things.*'⁵⁹³ That is, the social activity of recycling and re-evaluating the worth (or non-worth) of commodities as they are moved around in time and space, often revealing aspects of the economic fluctuations of the societies in which they are owned.⁵⁹⁴ In Parr's case, firstly, he caught the mid-moment of the rise, fall, and rise of the Morris Minor, which Kopytoff described as the '*ambiguous*' phase of a commodity's life, '*its status is inevitably ambiguous and open to the push and pull of events and desires, as it is shuffled about in the flux of social life.*'⁵⁹⁵ At the peak of its popularity, in the 1960s, it was an affordable, practical, yet comfortable version of the German Volkswagon, a vehicle designed for the labouring classes. After its fall from fashion some of its fortunes were eventually reversed, as it later became an international classic, featuring in rallies, with owner clubs and spare part depots springing up across the globe: '*Cars as commodities lose value as they age, but at the age of thirty they begin to move into the category of antiques and rise in value with every receding year...these are all processes within small groups and social networks.*'⁵⁹⁶ It was also celebrated in books such as '*Morris Minor The Biography*' where its author noted that it featured in Parr's photographic exhibition at The Galway Festival, 1982.⁵⁹⁷ Secondly, as a backdrop to this fashion of cars, Parr's images also showed a country in the process of an economic upturn following its admission into the European Economic Community (1973). Now, lured into the pleasures of unprecedented consumerism, where many remnants of previous generations' carefully nurtured possessions were simply discarded, and some, like the Morris Minor became immortalised as objects of Parr's

⁵⁹² Ibid, Also see my own discussion of a later colour version of the same vehicle in which I discussed its significance for Godwin's growing awareness of her own ageing process, in G. Alexander, '*Crossing the Landscape*', pp.41- 5

⁵⁹³ I. Kopytoff, '*The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process*', in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, Arjun Appadurai (Ed), Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.64

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid, p.83

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid, Page 80

⁵⁹⁷ M. Wainwright, '*Minor Monuments*', *Morris Minor The Biography*, Aurum Press Ltd, 2008 pp.139

photographic art. His Co-author, Fintan O'Toole, looked back on the images and wrote:

*...the economic expansion of the sixties, [took] rural Ireland from subsistence peasant farming to relative sophistication and affluence...In the west too there was the decline of an old community, only this time a decline that was taking place side by side with the rise of new values and a new culture...two different worlds in the same place.*⁵⁹⁸

The South Kent Coast

As the path turned right along the second half of ***Saxon Shore Way***, Godwin's scenes of the industrial landscape began to fade, giving way to larger expanses of sea, affluence, pleasure and pasture. This encouraged Godwin to examine work and play in the more refined remnants of the historical landscape of the South Kent coast. There is a subtle humour in a number of her images including '***The Street, Whitstable***' (1981) and '***Sandwich***' (1983), and on both occasions Godwin has interwoven her images very playfully with Sillitoe's text to provide a more performative picture, or tableau vivant, (figs 129, 130).⁵⁹⁹ In the first instance he described a crowded, sunny beach scene where '*Two Irish nuns talk to each other from their deckchairs*', but Godwin's image appeared to blow them out of their comfort and onto a lonelier, less convivial stretch of the shore. In the second instance, Sillitoe's language extended the theatrical metaphor by referring to '*a cricket match...being played, all contestants dressed in white.*'⁶⁰⁰ Here again, Godwin obliged by presenting a more farcical event, with a group of local cricketers having abandoned their match to look into some water for whatever may have fallen in – whether it was a ball, or another player?⁶⁰¹

However, there was a more judgemental theme in '***Reculver Abbey with Caravans***' (1981), which showed the once sacred site sinking into the skyline of a densely

⁵⁹⁸ F. O'Toole, 'A Fair Day', *Politico* online magazine, 01.07.84
http://politico.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5615:a-fair-day&catid=93:arts-and-culture&Itemid=1274

⁵⁹⁹ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, pp.88 & 105

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid, p.105

⁶⁰¹ Ibid, p.105

populated caravan park, (fig 87). Godwin expressed her ‘*dismay*’ at what she found, and had also included a smaller image of the historic site without its late twentieth century neighbours to show it: ‘...as I had hoped to see it, and I think most other people would hope to see it’.⁶⁰² Equally, Sillitoe described it as ‘*Caravanville with a vengeance*’ before amusing himself with the idea of a domino effect spectacle should one of the multitude of calor-gas bottles explode.⁶⁰³ There was less humour to be found in Godwin’s image, simply disapproval, in which the profane laundry on the line is sited in direct eye-line with the ancient towers, to push home her point. The same image was featured in *Our Forbidden Land*, where she used the opportunity to attack the country’s planning regulations for allowing unchecked leisure developments by speculative operators, which immediately brings to mind my earlier parallels with Clough Williams-Ellis.⁶⁰⁴ At the same time, she also aired her indignation at being challenged by ‘*Saxon experts*’, protesting about her ‘*unflattering*’ representation of ‘*our heritage*’, concluding: ‘*It makes me wonder what people expect of landscape photographers – it would seem that we are supposed to join in the ‘heritage’ game to show that everything in the countryside is lovely.*’⁶⁰⁵ Godwin’s pique at the reproach was artfully concealed in a valid retort to the general preference for a ‘chocolate box’ image of the countryside, although it also provided yet another example of her heightened sensitivity to criticism, despite her own value-laden comments.

As the journey neared its end, Sillitoe made it abundantly clear that despite his regular rants about signage, and mutterings about mud, he missed that drama in the more gentle terrain. Reflecting on his pastoral surroundings he stated, ‘*The bucolic way at times seems dull. I miss the sea, or a touch of interesting squalor.*’⁶⁰⁶ Proceeding along the Royal Military Canal, he revelled in a casual scene of ‘*three youths fishing*’ and commented on how their bad language disturbed some parents passing with young children, and how it ‘*delighted*’ the latter.⁶⁰⁷ These observations contained many elements reminiscent of his novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958), in which the anti-hero, Arthur Seaton, spent his trips to the country indulging

⁶⁰² F. Godwin, ‘*Out of the Air*’, *The Listener*, 28.03.85, (np), ‘Newspaper Reviews’ file, FGA, BL

⁶⁰³ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, p.93

⁶⁰⁴ F. Godwin, *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.48-9

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid

⁶⁰⁶ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, p.65

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid, p.165

in degenerate thoughts, or debauched activities, which seeped into the rural surroundings and corrupted its 'innocence', creating a more sordid image of nature. For example, as Seaton sat fishing in the sunshine, enjoying his moment of splendid isolation, he was reminded of a '*corporal in the army who said it was marvellous the things you thought about as you sat on the lavatory.*' thus equating both activities in the same psychological space.⁶⁰⁸ In another rural scene, this time a woodland site, Seaton unburdens his guilt regarding the illicit sex he was about to indulge in with the wife of a work colleague, firstly, he directs the blame onto her, as representative of her gender's betrayal of men in general, and secondly, into the silence of the '*primeval vegetation*' that would absorb their secret.⁶⁰⁹ As if it were these associations that were uppermost in his mind, Sillitoe slipped comfortably into familiar literary territory at this point, and whilst discussing the architectural features of Rye's famous landmarks, he irreverently announced to the reader that he stopped to '*hav[e] a piss...and the sheep walked away in disgust.*'⁶¹⁰

'Oare Creek' (1981)

In Godwin's work, the images of abandoned vehicles (twice in *The Saxon Shore Way*, and once in *Romney Marsh*) were signalling a country in economic decline. In '*Near the brickworks, Murston Nature Reserve*' (1983), the wrecked car elevated above a further heap of industrial debris appeared to be 'crowned' by a gasometer, which has effectively been caught at half-mast (fig 131). The nature reserve, represented by a few wild flowers in the long grass, is essentially absented by the surrounding junk, which only served to emphasise Jeffrey's descriptions of the work as a '*complex*' site of '*survivals and innovations.*'⁶¹¹ For there is something less exuberant, more dejected about the cars in Godwin's images, they have neither the levity, nor humour stimulated by Parr's presentations of old cars as substitute homes and hedges. It is as if the images met at the passing point of their respective country's moving fortunes, one sinking further into recession, and the other on its climb towards prosperity. Although, it might also be said that both have a quality of bathos, so often given to fallen symbols of social prestige now reduced to a comedic role, because, unlike the old family pet, they refuse to disappear quietly. Fintan O'Toole recognised

⁶⁰⁸ A. Sillitoe, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, p.216

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid p.52

⁶¹⁰ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, p.175

⁶¹¹ Ibid, p.62 and I. Jeffrey, '*Topography and Metaphor*', p.5

this aspect in Parr's series '*as the one section for which [he] thought that words were unnecessary...*' erring towards the '*silent sadness*' encountered in photographic timepieces showing the old fading out, and the new sweeping in.⁶¹²

'*Oare Creek's*' first appearance in *The Saxon Shore Way* was one in a series of three used to flag the approach to Oare village, being there, and leaving it.⁶¹³ Here, an abstract treatment of the first image, '*Near Oare*' (1981) denoted an aesthetic purpose rather than environmental considerations, (fig 132). Its various components creating a series of textured patterns that converted a fairly nondescript field into a conceptual construct, whereas '*Oare Creek*' (1981) has been layered with sub-texts of metaphor, irony and foreboding, (fig 133).⁶¹⁴ Its sense of drama is comparable to the scale and awe created by many of the works discussed in *The Remains of Elmet*. Here, the two arrow-like white posts immediately call to mind the CND peace symbol (minus their outer circles). There is no record of Godwin acknowledging it thus, but its being there added further layers of significance to the overall drama of the image when re-used in *Our Forbidden Land*. That is, two ingredients in its design by Gerald Holtom, were the notion of '*the little man in despair*' and '*the triumph of good over evil*.'⁶¹⁵ As the eye is led across the frame via the mysterious object floating in the shallow waters of the estuary, it comes to rest on an almost impenetrable wall of thick black smoke on the other side. The smoke has an anthropomorphic quality, from which the head of an enormous recumbent bear becomes visible – it's eye the gap in the smoke, and the huge scale of its mass able to be appreciated by a dwarfed, and barely discernable pylon, on the left. The irony being that these gigantic objects were so often the dominant features of Godwin's landscape images.

Stubble burning became a more common sight in the UK from the late '60s onwards as farming practices changed in Britain. It came to be seen as one of a number of symptoms that epitomised all that was wrong with modern intensive farming, it started as '*arable farming intensified and artificial fertilizer began to be preferred to*

⁶¹² M. Wainwright, '*Minor Monuments*', p.140 and F. O'Toole, '*A Fair Day*', *Politico* online magazine, 01.07.84

⁶¹³ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, pp. 67,71 and 73

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 67 & 71

⁶¹⁵ M. Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain*, p.115, f/n1.

*the ploughing in of straw to renew the structure and humus in soil.*⁶¹⁶ Widely deemed as destructive and hazardous to hedgerows, wildlife, local residents, and drivers, its continued use by farmers, some of whom deliberately failed to operate within legislated byelaws from the mid-70s, was finally outlawed in 1993.⁶¹⁷ Graham Martin writing in '*NEW scientist*' (1985) wryly noted that in order to avoid an angry farmers lobby on one side, and an equally angry group of environmentalists on the other, the Government would be implementing a ban through the Department of Transport to protect road users rather than the landscape'.⁶¹⁸ Coincidentally, Sillitoe's text reported that Oare Creek had a long history connected to burning seaweed, together with its dangerous effects on the local population he noted that it was used,

*...to make cinder ash or kelp for potters. The burning was done in holes dug on the beach, and so vile was the smell that the practice was forbidden by Queen Elizabeth on the grounds that it was bad for the health of people who lived round about.*⁶¹⁹

As with the motif of the abandoned cars, photographers were also drawn to the drama presented by this annual spectacle on the landscape across Britain. For example, Jorge Lewinski photographed a scorched field, captioned: '*Scene near Helpston, Cambridgeshire. The humbler one's concept of beauty, the more likely one is to find it.*' for Margaret Drabble's book *A Writer's Britain*, (fig 134).⁶²⁰ The main purpose of the image was to visually demonstrate Drabble's point about the labourer's view of the land, as opposed to the landlord's proprietorial survey in her discussion about eighteenth to nineteenth century poetry and '*The Pastoral Vision.*'⁶²¹ Consequently, his image was taken from a low viewpoint, intentionally keeping the viewer's eye close to the level of the soil for some fifty percent of the frame. However, Lewinski's composition, like Godwin's '*Near Oare*', also prioritised the

⁶¹⁶ '*Stubble Burning*', *The environment encyclopedia and directory 2001* By Europa Publications Limited, 3rd Ed, Europa Publications, Europa, p135

⁶¹⁷ Notes on '*Straw and Stubble Burning, House of Commons Debate*, 30.11.89 <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1989/nov/30/straw-and-stubble-burning> CPRE began a campaign against the practice in 1983, and considered its banning one of their successes in the 1980s. <http://www.cpre.org.uk/about/achievements/1980s>

⁶¹⁸ G. Martin, '*Stamping out the stubble fires*', *New Scientist*, 6.06.85, pp.25-6

⁶¹⁹ A. Sillitoe and F. Godwin, *Saxon Shore Way*, pp.70-2

⁶²⁰ M. Drabble *A Writer's Britain*, 1989, p58

⁶²¹ *Ibid*, pp.47-103

aesthetic possibilities afforded in the patterns created by the burnt crop. Thus the black and gold colours created a visual richness that dominated the image, meaning the lines converging at the vanishing point almost failed to hold the viewer's eye, which hovered happily on the drama below.

In a second example, Paul Graham's image '*Burning Fields*' (1981/2) signified one leg of the journey in his book, *A1- The Great North Road*, (1981-2) (fig.135). The project was a narrative based on Graham's recreated holiday route from his childhood, and part of his stated intention was to plot the road's decline (and that of the different services attached to it) since being replaced by the M1 (1958).⁶²² In '*Burning Fields*', Graham showed the stubble fire in full fury across the fields of Melmerby, North Yorkshire. A token of black humor was inserted with the '*HOTEL*' sign at the centre, looking like the last vestige of the property consumed by the flames as they rose into a perfect summer sky. The series was shot in colour throughout, which not only represented an early example of photographers moving on from the black and white tradition, it also introduced the visual language of the new British colour documentarists; by contrast, Lewinski's images were seventy-five percent monochrome, indicating an editorial, rather than a personal choice. This new mode of representing Britain in the '80s both redefined the role of colour photography, as a device of social critique, as well as offering a fresh perspective for photography as an art form. Thus in many of the other images, Graham appeared to play with an irregular sequencing of Tory blues and Labour reds as signifiers couched in the general blandness of the scenes drawing out a political reading, as Graham subsequently noted of this project, '*particular images wrote themselves.*'⁶²³

Chris Townsend located Graham's images in the tradition of British artists who had structured their writings/images on the process of the journey, including: '*William Defoe, William Cobbett, J.B. Priestley... George Orwell... Bill Brandt.*'⁶²⁴ He went on to state that as with this list of predecessors, Graham's project was less about a

⁶²² P. Graham, in '*Hatfield and the North: Paul Graham's A1*' by Tim Malyon, Creative Camera, April 1983, p.912

⁶²³ P. Graham, Interview with Shirley Read, '*Oral History of British Photography*', BLSA, Track One, 28.12.07

⁶²⁴ C. Townsend, '*Paul Graham poetic journeys in a political landscape* Parachute, Contemporary Arts Magazine, 01.04.2000. A sincere note of thanks to Chris, for tracking down, and sending me a copy of this paper.

physical journey, than the personal knowledge and experience gained from the socialised landscape he had travelled through: ‘...as with Defoe, Cobbett, Priestley and contemporary British film-makers such as Patrick Keillor, an often radical political critique emerges that above all uses signs in the landscape as telling (and foretelling) metaphors of social crisis.’ In ‘**Burning Fields**’, Townsend took as his starting point the visual joke of the hotel being consumed by flames in Graham’s image and moved it into the realms of socio-cultural politics. By drawing on specific episodes of popular protest/uprisings from modern and past history (the mid-80s miners’ strike and the seventeenth century Levellers’ rebellion), he made links between their political agendas based on class repression and the violent repercussions those actions incurred:

*...the site of Graham's photograph is not in a coalfield area, but lies between the mines of South Yorkshire and those of Northumberland. But the rectangle that the flames trace in the field behind the hotel sign speaks of riot, arson and the destruction of property. It is the outline of the hotel -- the space of the mobile, moneyed, managerial class, the space of the traveling salesman -- that burns, the signifier of class that has, to invoke an even older tradition of English rebellion, that of the egalitarian dissenters of the seventeenth century, been "levelled."*⁶²⁵

More recently, Alastair Sooke has also remarked on the style of imagery in Graham’s ‘**Burning Fields**’ (1981), stating: *The picture feels apocalyptic, the epitome of desolation. It is the antithesis of England’s green and pleasant land, and offers a brutal vision of Britain on the ropes.*⁶²⁶ Sooke’s comment can be seen to carry strong associations with Godwin’s image **Oare Creek** (1981), with its burning edgelands and broken terrain. As stated in Chapter One, Ian Jeffrey has long noted the use of the apocalyptic in her work, in particular with **Remains of Elmet**, he observed,

Elmet...the last Celtic kingdom to fall to the Angles. It fostered the industrial revolution in textiles, but, by the 1970s...it had decayed to the point of looking like a figure for the end of the world. This description may be unfair to Calderdale, but

⁶²⁵ Ibid, p.1

⁶²⁶ A. Sooke, ‘**Paul Graham retrospective, Whitechapel Gallery review,**’ *The Telegraph*, 26.04.2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/8473903/Paul-Graham-retrospective-Whitechapel-Gallery-review.html>

Remains of Elmet has to be understood as an invention in the apocalyptic style, which interested photographers in the 1970s (and which certainly informed **Land**).⁶²⁷

As previously discussed in this chapter, the use of apocalyptic language was very popular in various areas of British culture from the Cold War period onward. And as shown in *The Blueprint for Survival*, environmental movements were swift to manipulate its emotive potential, in order to ignite public support for their different causes. More recently, the theologian and environmentalist Martin Palmer has written of its timeless efficacy for shocking people into action especially in the environmental cause, he wrote, ‘Such groups often fall back on the vivid language of biblical or Vedic (Hindu) accounts of the end of the world – apocalyptic imagery that encapsulates our deepest terrors more graphically than any chart or statistical breakdown can ever do.’⁶²⁸ As Jeffrey’s comments made clear, from the end of the ‘70s Godwin was already established in a mode of work that would suit her move to more environmentally focused projects in the following decade, and images such as ‘*Oare Creek*’, were ready to be converted into issues that concerned her in *Our Forbidden Land*.

Godwin’s work with the Council for the Preservation of Rural England – CPRE, (1986)

CPRE’s *modus operandi* altered very gradually in the years since its inception, but noticeably gathered pace from the mid-70s, when the expansion of media technology became crucial to its survival.⁶²⁹ As the new leadership replaced the old guard its fortunes fared far stronger than those of the Conservation Society, which ceased to exist altogether, due as Horace Herring noted to its leadership’s refusal to change with the times. Thus, when Chris Hall (1975-80) replaced Sir Herbert Griffin (1965 -1975) as Director, he brought with him a sharper business practice based on his combined experience of working in journalism, politics, and a term as secretary to the Ramblers

⁶²⁷ I. Jeffrey, *Obituary for Fay Godwin*, *Guardian*, 31.05.05

⁶²⁸ M. Palmer and V. Finlay, *Faith in Conservation; New Approaches to Religions and the Environment*, Washington DC, The World Bank, 2003, pp.xiii-xiv

⁶²⁹ P. Lowe et al, ‘Professionals and Volunteers in the Environmental Policy Process’, 2001, pp.8-9, Sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council under the Democracy and Participation Research Programme <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cre/publish/Books/CPREfinal.pdf>

Association.⁶³⁰ Hall, in turn was replaced by Robin Grove-White (1981-1987), who employed his considerable communications skills, hence in the media, image-conscious '80s, CPRE attempted to lose its '*silly woolly jumper*' associations by honing their PR skills along with other major British environmental organisations.⁶³¹

In 1986 CPRE's decision to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary with a photographic exhibition, can also be seen as evidence of the medium's rising popularity as a visual art form.⁶³² Now at the peak of her popular status, Godwin was one of twenty-three photographers including John Blakemore and John Davies, commissioned to work on the project. It was a nationwide survey of rural sites deemed environmentally vulnerable to intrusive and unnecessary development. The results were exhibited at London's Royal Festival Hall in a show entitled: '***Tomorrow!***' and later in the book: ***England's Glory*** (1987) from which my examples are drawn.⁶³³ Godwin covered the largest, and possibly most controversial site – the Channel Tunnel, during its construction near Folkstone (1988-94). All evidence points to it being her first dedicated project to an environmental cause, although there may have been previous invitations that she turned down, as one interview suggests:

*When people first asked me if I wanted to do environmental work, I declined - that was for news photographers. But, I realised it wasn't quite that simple: a love of the landscape requires a certain environmental awareness, and there is a journalist in me.*⁶³⁴

Godwin's earlier reluctance carries hints of the constant balancing act that needed to be maintained between her commercial survival, and her growing fury about the politics of the landscape, and how that finally tipped over in favour of the latter. In

⁶³⁰ C. Caufield, '***Chris Hall: countryman for all Seasons***' *New Scientist*, 22.01.81, p.199

And, P. Lowe and J. Goyder, ***Environmental Groups in Politics***, p.75

⁶³¹ D. Puttnam (President of CRPE), Interview with Glyn Worsnip, ***Breakfast time***, BBC1, Spring 1986, Video Cassette recording, GFA

⁶³² P. Melchett, Interview with author, 15.12.10, Melchett recalled ***Greenpeace*** commissioning a series of books led by photography, in particular, Dennis Gilbert's photographic essays in Kate Baillie (Ed.), ***Coastline: Britain's Threatened Heritage***, Kingfisher Books, 1987, accompanied by text from established author/poets including Ted Hughes, John Fowles and Hammond Innes.

⁶³³ The exhibition: ***Tomorrow!*** Ran from 4-28 September, 1986 and the book: ***England's Glory*** was Introduced by John Le Carré, the text by Gareth Huw Davies, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987

⁶³⁴ S. Bainbridge ***Ag***, 2001, & partially reproduced by them upon her death in '***Godwin dies aged 74***', 2005 http://agenda.typepad.com/agenda/2005/05/fay_godwin_dies.html

terms of media coverage, she became one of the most vociferous photographers, by featuring in a number of current/rural affairs TV programmes promoting the event such as: '*Breakfast time*', '*Newsnight*', and '*Farm Focus*'.⁶³⁵ Notably, on each occasion she explained her recent conversion to opposing the Channel Tunnel, on the grounds that there would be no public enquiry and no provision for environmental consultation.⁶³⁶ The success of *Land* had elevated Godwin to a form of celebrity manifesting itself in an increase of media interest for articles about her life and work, which she often referred to with great ambivalence.⁶³⁷ That is she often spoke about wanting to keep her anonymity, both for work and personal reasons, yet she was clearly prepared to speak from public platforms to promote both the cause, and her work to a wider audience. Thus Godwin sat conspicuously, amongst six of her peers, sporting a pair of sunglasses on the cover of *The Sunday Times Magazine* (31.08.86) in their coverage of the CPRE exhibition, (fig 136). The image captured both sides of her predicament on the one hand she had spent some fifteen years establishing a successful status in photography, and this was clearly being acknowledged through the celebrity grouping. Whilst on the other hand, she strongly resented the '*personality cult*' that accompanied a high profile position, preferring to identify, and be identified with the other fine art photographers within her field such as Paul Hill, John Blakemore and Ray Moore.⁶³⁸ And this aspect played one role in the way that Godwin came to regard this commission as a failure and a regret.

The celebrity angle was a trap that snared many perceptions of the profession outside the photographic community. The ready connections made between fashion, society or celebrity photographers would have been reinforced partially by the presence of David Bailey, Terence Donovan, Patrick Lichfield, Snowdon, and even more so with Koo Stark and Linda McCartney. Indeed Peter Melchett's recollection of the event was based on the latter's inclusion, which also suggests an appreciation for the allure of photography as a fashionable medium at the time, rather than an in-depth appreciation of its more serious aims.⁶³⁹ From CPRE's perspective, it would have

⁶³⁵ F. Godwin, Interview with Glyn Worsnip, *Breakfast time*, BBC1, Spring 1986, F. Godwin, Interview with Joan Bakewell, *Newsnight*, BBC2, 03.09.86, and F. Godwin, Interview with Nick Hudson, *Farm Focus*, TV South, 09.09.86, video cassette recordings, GFA

⁶³⁶ Ibid, These views were also reiterated by Godwin in *Our Forbidden Land*, p118

⁶³⁷ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA

⁶³⁸ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA

⁶³⁹ P. Melchett, Interview with author, 15.12.10

brought the desired level of media attention (thus potential public interest) to the established conservation issues being raised. However, from the perspective of the serious landscape photographers, it did very little to progress a wider understanding of the changing status being forged, such as their grittier focus on environmental issues, or of its practitioners seeking recognition for the creative element within their work. Thus Koo Stark's comments on '*Newsnight*' would have confirmed the misrepresentation of those serious aims by declaring that she '*care[d] deeply about the British countryside... naïvely adding ...I go for drives in the country a lot...*'⁶⁴⁰

Other observers of the period have confirmed Godwin's views, retrospectively. Barry Lane described the celebrity element as '*a very odd mix...[Fay] wouldn't have any respect for some of those people being real photographers...*'⁶⁴¹ Similarly, Peter Cattrell, whose work also featured in the exhibition, noted that a disproportionate focus was given to the 'celebrity photographers', based solely on the glamour factor, he recalled: '*The Private View was quiet with lots of paparazzi waiting for the McCartneys, who duly turned up and got all the coverage.*'⁶⁴² This view was confirmed by John Blakemore who also believed the original plans for the commission had been submerged following CPRE's switch to the commercial and glamorous aspect of photography as the vehicle of their project, he recalled '*when CPRE first set it up, it seemed like it could be a really interesting exhibition, and then all these people jumped on the bandwagon, and it became something else...*'⁶⁴³

Another consequence of the CPRE exhibition, particularly for the established landscape photographers, was the questionable terms of its visual theme, which largely resulted in an unmitigated romanticised view of Britain. The reasons offered by Patrick Lichfield, (and later reiterated by Gavin Grant, Exhibition Co-ordinator) in response to the question: '*how can "beautiful photographs of beautiful places" progress the environmental message at the heart of the exhibition?*' were based on the established argument that if viewers saw the beauty of the landscape in peril, their response would be more attuned to protecting it.⁶⁴⁴ However, as I have already

⁶⁴⁰ K. Stark, Interview with Joan Bakewell, *Newsnight*, BBC2, 03.09.86

⁶⁴¹ B. Lane and S. Isherwood, Interview with author, 11.03.10

⁶⁴² P. Cattrell in correspondence with author, 14.11.12

⁶⁴³ J. Blakemore, Interview with author 18.06.10

⁶⁴⁴ These comments made by the Presenters of *Breakfast time* and *Newsnight*

shown, this position had already become less tenable within the photographic community by the turn of the previous decade, with Godwin, Blakemore and Davies all distancing themselves from their earlier styles. Criticism also came from within the photographic community as Cattrell recalled:

*I went to a symposium at the Cambridge Darkroom discussing landscape issues with mostly critical theorists...and they absolutely slammed the CPRE project as tripe. I think it was a missed opportunity to do something worthwhile about the environment. It became presented as a sentimental, nostalgic view of England – hence the title **England's Glory**.*⁶⁴⁵

Blakemore's main regret about the project was the dilution of its political element regarding the individual circumstances of the various sites, particularly in terms of the media coverage, he stated, '*the original brief had been to show the beauty of the countryside, yet I got CPRE to agree to me including signs of protest.*'⁶⁴⁶ His location, Fulbeck Airfield, Lincolnshire, was one of four (within the scheme) concerned with plans for nuclear power/waste, an issue he believed was deliberately ignored in the *The Sunday Times Magazine* on the grounds that it was '*only a very recent problem.*'⁶⁴⁷ Interestingly, John Fowles' article for the magazine implied some support on that point, which came at the end of his highly ambiguous summary of the exhibition and its aims. This began with his barely cloaked condemnation of CPRE's historical '*conservatism behind the conservation*', after which he lumped them together with the '*general problem*' caused by other '*would-be saviours*' (a reference to the recent proliferation of environmental groups vying for public attention and financial support).⁶⁴⁸ It was in Fowles' use of the '*David and Goliath*' story – one of diminishing rural resources attempting to cope with the growing demands from urban, government and industrial expansion, that he concluded, '*Only a small part of the menaces of Goliath are shown [in the exhibition].*'⁶⁴⁹ As well as upholding

⁶⁴⁵ P. Cattrell in correspondence with author, 14.11.12

⁶⁴⁶ J. Blakemore, Interview with author 18.06.10

D. Brittain, '*The Garden*', an interview with John Blakemore, *Creative Camera*, Aug/Sep '91, pp.14-5

⁶⁴⁷ J. Blakemore, Interview with author 18.06.10 - during which he relayed the journalist's reaction.

The other photographers focussing on nuclear issues were: Stephen Lawson's Druridge Bay, Northumberland, pp. 84-9, Jenny May's Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex, pp.98-103, and Alastair Morrison's site: Winfrith, Dorset, 124-9, *England's Glory*

⁶⁴⁸ J. Fowles, '*This Green and Sorry Land*', *Sunday Times Magazine*, 31.08.86, p.21

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid

Blakemore's concerns, Fowles' comment had echoes of Peter Melchett's observations, (made earlier), regarding the sanitised presentation of the countryside by the BBC, thus exposing the weakness of a one-sided visual approach rather than showing a balanced picture of the countryside under threat.

Blakemore's black and white images were one of his first landscape projects since his break with the genre earlier in the decade.⁶⁵⁰ His three-page narrative (Figs 137,138,139) presented a series of seemingly idyllic rural scenes disrupted by events taking place in the smaller images below. Recalling Drabble's discussion of pictorial conventions, Blakemore's arrangement of warning signs reinterpreted the main image, which was positioned from the labourer's view of the land, thus pitting wider community values in opposition to the Government/nuclear industry (landlords) intentions to impose their toxic plans. Blakemore's allegory of Eden about to be destroyed was premised on the county's title as 'the vegetable garden of England' under threat, where the church – the spiritual heart of the village, is mediated through its graveyard, and the dark shadows in the centre of the wheat field seem to warn that alien activity is afoot.

John Davies, also moved outside CPRE's official remit by featuring evidence of the damage incurred by limestone quarrying at Eldon Hill, in the Peak District National Park. In his 'celebration' of three seasonal aspects of the quarry he used colour, as well as his customary high vantage point to survey the scene, (figs 140,141,142). In the first and last images, he both distanced and blended the great scar of the quarry, into the surrounding elements of sky and land, to create a natural autumnal and wintery camouflage. By reversing that approach in the middle image, his close-up of the vast quarry and its huge industrial mass succeeded in amplifying the visual shock and rupture to its surrounding pastoral scene. Interestingly, a previous commission in nearby Buxton had sharpened Davies' appreciation of how the town's prosperity had been built on the quarrying industry during the Victorian era.⁶⁵¹ Therefore his final image – a two-page panorama of the region around Eldon Hill, with its patchwork fields intersected by roads and farm buildings, also showed evidence of the historical

⁶⁵⁰ J. Blakemore, Interview with author 18.06.10

⁶⁵¹ S. Butler, '*Landscapes in Transition*', *Creative Camera*, November, 1985, p23

re-shaping and incursions on the landscape, which intimated a subversive challenge to the regressive aspects of the conservation argument.

As discussed throughout this chapter, *Our Forbidden Land* was the only publication in which Godwin took a more confrontational stand in her work concerning environmental issues. Her CPRE images mainly followed the same lyrical yet subtly encoded technique established in *Land*, that tended to reinforce the immensity and endurance of nature, with the smallness and impermanence of man. Of the twelve images produced for the exhibition, only one made explicit reference to her protest theme, in which a small poster objecting to the '*fixed link*' is pinned to a public footpath stile (fig 143). Here, Godwin's humour is also evident with her creation of a Giacometti-like figure featured marching up the hill as either friend or foe of the protest? Interestingly, although this image appeared in all the promotional TV footage, it was not one of the five more benign images that appeared in *England's Glory*, which were more sympathetic to CPRE's scheme.⁶⁵² Thus in '*View to the North of Summerhouse Hill*' (1986) there is a hint of the natural balance in the landscape with the snow-clad slope in the foreground, sweeping towards a copse of dark conifers in the background producing an overall effect of a floating yin and yang symbol at the centre of the image, (fig 144).

Whereas *Shakespeare Cliff* (1986) recalled her use of the sublime, and the power of nature to shock and awe, as shown in *Remains of Elmet*, (fig 145). There is a suggestion of Caspar David Friedrich's image, '*Wanderer of the Sea of Fog*' (1818), with the transience of man represented by the passing train at the base of the image, (fig 146). Also, the sense of terror and morbidity has moved inland, to the series of garden sheds shown perched at the cliff's edge, and where a gap in the fencing proposed a home-made 'lovers leap'. Notions of suicide were already woven into the cliff's history through its namesake, as the site where the misguided Earl of Gloucester attempted to end his own life as a final act of despair in the tragedy of '*King Lear*'.⁶⁵³ In Stephen Purcell's discussion of the play, he described the cliffs as representing a '*boundary between the known and unknown*', noting when extended to the nation at large they symbolised '...a boundary between land and sea, high and

⁶⁵² F. Godwin, '*The Kent Downs*', *England's Glory* (1987), pp.56-63

⁶⁵³ Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act IV, Scene VI – *The Country near Dover*

low, between Britain and the outside.’⁶⁵⁴ This symbol of a national identity was strongly reinforced in Vera Lyn’s rousing patriotic song from WW2: ‘*The White cliffs of Dover*’, therefore notions of a self-destruct theme were highly legible in Godwin’s work. As these references have shown, the physical and emotional drama encapsulated in Godwin’s image came with a ready set of socio-cultural and historical values, which were intrinsically linked to its imminent fate of becoming a homemade rubbish dump for the Channel Tunnel building project.

Godwin’s view that this project had represented a mistake in her career had a number of interesting consequences. She told Val Williams that it had been ‘*a very damaging experience, worse than any commercial project, they ripped me off, breached my copyright, lied, behaved disgracefully and put me off doing anything for charity again.*’⁶⁵⁵ However, her acceptance – within the same year – to become President of the *Ramblers Association* (another registered charity), clearly belied that statement. To some degree, Godwin’s views regarding CPRE also presented a typical example of her intransigence on matters in which she felt she had been mistreated, as well as showing her readiness to take the victim’s role, similar to the Sillitoe incident. Yet again it highlighted the difficulties encountered by freelance photographers trying to balance professional and economic needs with personal convictions at a point when environmental considerations had been elevated in the national consciousness.

Two months after the CPRE exhibition she was one of the first British photographers to be invited to take part in the *The Mission Photographique Transmanche* (1988-2005), by Morris Newcombe, owner of *Photogallery*, and one of the founding organisers of the project – which she quickly accepted.⁶⁵⁶ In fact subsequent correspondence indicates there being a shared enthusiasm by the French organisers, for her to be involved with future projects, and the *Saxon Shore Way* formed part of

⁶⁵⁴ S. Purcell, Interview with Denise Winterman, ‘*White Cliffs of Dover: Why are they so important to the British? BBC News Magazine*’ 29.08.12
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-19343382>

⁶⁵⁵ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA, part 5, tape 3, side A. As previously noted in f/n 358, Godwin subsequently turned down the gift of a lifetime’s membership.

⁶⁵⁶ M. Newcombe, letter to Fay Godwin, 08.11.86, ‘Consignment File’, FGA, BL. Subsequent correspondence: (27.11.86 – Jan ’87). *The Mission Photographique Transmanche* (1987-2005) was an Anglo-French photographic project intended to document a range of subjects affected by or connected to the construction of the Channel Tunnel in Britain and France.

the *Centre Regionale la Photographie, Nord Pas de Calais* exhibition (1986).⁶⁵⁷

Upon learning that her involvement could block sponsorship from Eurotunnel, Godwin effectively extricated herself from any wrong-doing by claiming professional immunity through her CPRE work. From her perspective the blame lay with the organisations involved, this included Eurotunnel for being overly '*secretive*'; CPRE for mismanaging a disputed caption on one of her images (upsetting Eurotunnel); and lastly, she stated her quarrel was with the British Government, not Eurotunnel.⁶⁵⁸

Aspects of her commercial instincts overriding any residue of absolute certitude can be gleaned from a chance remark made to Newcombe six years later when she stated: '*I have heard nothing from Trans-Marche or SEA – South East Arts, and realised I didn't have time to apply for a commission. But would love to sell prints.*'⁶⁵⁹

Godwin's appointment as President of The Ramblers Association – RA, (1987-90)

During the early '80s the *Ramblers' Association* (RA) was also in the process of implementing organisational changes as it became more politically pro-active in environmental matters. And it is highly likely that Godwin would have read Geoff Eastwood's contribution to *Ten:8's 'Rural Myths'* issue in 1983, in which he discussed the relevance of a recent RA access victory at Drifffield Canal, East Yorkshire, on the newly opened 'Wolds Way' (1982).⁶⁶⁰ This would have counted as a triumph for the '*Forbidden Britain Campaign*', an initiative introduced during Peter Melchett's term of Presidency (1981-4), and officially launched in 1985.⁶⁶¹

According to the latter, the early '80s was a period when '*the conservation movement really got a significant, national, political voice and some power.*'⁶⁶² Godwin's appointment as President (1987-90) was also part of other changes taking place within the organisation, and had parallels with CPRE's efforts to replace the image of men with beards and bobble hats. That is, she became its first female president, and the

⁶⁵⁷ P. Devin, letter to Morris Newcombe, 19.11.86 and M. Newcombe 'Report' January '87, 'Consignment File', FGA, BL

⁶⁵⁸ T. Evans, '*The Mission*', *Creative Camera*, Feb/Mar '91, pp.11-3,

F. Godwin, '*More Tales from The Chunnel*' in '*Letters*', *Creative Camera*, Jun/Jul '91, T. Cornish, '*The Last Word*' in '*Letters*', *Creative Camera*, Oct/Nov '91. Also see Godwin's later reference to the Channel Tunnel construction in *Our Forbidden Land*, pp.118-121

⁶⁵⁹ F. Godwin, letter to M. Newcombe, 08.01.92, 'Consignment File', GFA, BL

⁶⁶⁰ G. Eastwood, '*Rights of Way*', *Ten:8*, Issue No.12, p.17 1983

⁶⁶¹ P. Melchett Interview with author, 15.12.10

⁶⁶² Ibid

first person from the art world.⁶⁶³ Alan Mattingly, Director of the RA (1974-98), recalled that following the appointment of her predecessor the entertainer, Mike Harding (1984-7), there was a conscious move towards finding another distinguished figurehead with a suitable pedigree, as previous presidents, '*had either been politicians sympathetic to the association or "internal" appointees...not...well known outside the association...[Fay] seemed an obvious choice.*'⁶⁶⁴

Mattingly's description of courting a prestigious individual reflected the aims pursued by CPRE, yet also posed the question *why* Godwin agreed to do it considering her previous unsatisfactory experience? Furthermore, due to her enhanced public profile with *Land*, she had a growing list of other commitments and aims including: the Bradford Fellowship (1986-7), teaching workshops, national and international exhibitions, media engagements including the '*South Bank Show*', as well as a declared intent to promote her work in America.⁶⁶⁵ Godwin's reasons for accepting the office have always spoken of the honour and privilege she felt in being asked, and whilst that is not in question, how it came to affect her professional status, and output at the time, is of particular interest. Chris Hall (then acting-chairman of the RA), nominated her partly on the basis of *Land*, as well as having interviewed her on a number of subsequent occasions, recalled her finding the administrative role challenging, both personally and professionally.⁶⁶⁶ In the first case, he recollected that she had little experience of, or inclination for some of the ceremonial duties involved, which caused a degree of awkwardness in some formal proceedings, and in the second case, her many work commitments often compromised her time, which caused tension on both sides.⁶⁶⁷ In terms of what the official role required from her, 'Melchett recalled Godwin making it absolutely clear to him that she would not do it just to be '*a name*', rather she would do it '*to help and achieve something*', which does suggest that she was more circumspect about committing herself to further charity work, and looked more towards a practical contribution.⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶³ A. Mattingly in correspondence with the author, 04.07.11

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁶⁵ F. Godwin Interview by Liz Sagues '*The Mind is Emptied, the Spirit is Found*', *Ham & High*, 26.04.85, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

⁶⁶⁶ C. Hall, Interview with author, 10.04.12

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid, Barry Lane also commented on Godwin '*not being a committee person*' when acting for the Arts Council photographic committee in 1983, B. Lane, interview, 11.03.10

⁶⁶⁸ P. Melchett, speaking at '*The Fay Godwin Memorial*', British Library Conference Centre, 16.07.05, DVD Courtesy of Charles Mapleston, Malachite Co

Thus from Hall's perspective, the suggestion was that although Godwin came with excellent credentials, both her workload, and her formal involvement meant, in retrospect, she had also been something of an ambitious choice to hold office. This is perhaps best exemplified in an extract from Mattingly's obituary to her:

*Although she was a kind and charming person, she did not suffer easily people whom she felt were fools or villains. On one occasion I introduced Fay to the then chief executive of the National Trust. Without ceremony, she pinned him to the wall and berated him over the policy of making photographers – artists, for heaven's sake – pay to take pictures of Stonehenge...*⁶⁶⁹

Mattingly portrayed a fractious side of Godwin that was very familiar to those who knew her, as an earlier reference to Christopher MacLehose demonstrated (see Co-optic section of Chapter One p.102). Yet on the other hand, as with CPRE's distraction with the celebrity element revealed, his comments also betrayed the general lack of appreciation for the concept of photography being an art form, and the personal struggle that underpinned her own, and others' aims to be accepted as creative people.

From Godwin's perspective, her role as president was entirely different to participating in a group commission such as that represented by CPRE, as it gave her more control of how both she and her work were represented. In the final analysis it was clearly a very astute choice, built on personal beliefs, pragmatism as well as the kudos it brought. Because she allied herself with a movement she had been connected to for over thirty years; its roots were stemmed in a socialist tradition - another milieu with which she was familiar, which carried less of the taint of 'conservatism' alluded to so pointedly by John Fowles (earlier). Also, notwithstanding her relative lack of active service in environmental politics, she had earned credibility due, quite literally, to her long experience and knowledge in the field. Finally, as has been shown throughout this chapter, the book that came to define her environmental campaigning, *Our Forbidden Land* (1990) was, on the whole, unequivocal in its intention to expose

⁶⁶⁹ A. Mattingly, 'Photographer of genius, environmentalist of passion', *Walk* magazine, Autumn 05, p.40
<http://www.walkmag.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/40-41-faygodwin.pdf>

a negative side to many of those organisations that counted themselves as the current custodians of the Britain and its landscape.

On the other hand, Godwin's drive for further acknowledgement of her achievements, in an area to which she had devoted a great deal of energy and personal resource exacted its own price. Peter Cattrell's memory of the late '80s was of the heavy demands the research for ***Our Forbidden Land*** had placed on Godwin both physically and emotionally.⁶⁷⁰ He recalled that the combination of investigations into the different subjects required something of an exhausting nationwide exercise, and that many of her findings were very distressing: '*Fay was very depressed whilst working on Our Forbidden Land...she spent as much time researching as photographing...and some of the pictures did not reflect the anger and misery they were clearly stirring up in her.*'⁶⁷¹ Cattrell's comments on Godwin's inner conflicts were also reflected in my opening discussion, where I described how moving into a confrontational area with her images had caused her some concerns, though with much of the rage being siphoned through her text. Also later, in the discussion around her use of the image: '*Meall Mor, Glencoe*' where she appeared to have wrestled with artistic instincts, before convincing herself that it reflected her greater environmental concerns over public and private transport issues. All of which adds to the highly complex nature of her work in which she strived to promote a balanced documentary and creative content. ***Our Forbidden Land*** was not Godwin's final documentary project, however its taxing requirements were partly responsible for the next phase of her career, which were the colour close-ups, yet before they were able to be fully realised, she returned to Yorkshire and investigated colour at Bradford.

⁶⁷⁰ P. Cattrell, Interview with author, 24.11.10

⁶⁷¹ Ibid

Chapter Three: 'A Homecoming'

*'In time,
 No one will remember our work
 Our life will pass like the traces of a cloud
 And be scattered like
 Mist that is chased by the
 Rays of the sun
 For our time is the passing of a shadow
 And our lives will run like
 Sparks through the stubble.
 I place a delphinium, Blue, upon your grave.'*⁶⁷²

The opening of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television (NMPFT), in 1983 was a significant achievement in terms of acknowledging the status of photography as an art form in the public consciousness.⁶⁷³ As an institution, its creation was the crowning glory, and final outcome of the flowering of the photographic culture of the '70s and '80s of which Godwin was an exemplar. Its geographical location in Bradford addressed a range of political, socio-cultural and economical issues of the era, such as the government's regionalisation of the arts; its educational facilities met some of the demands of an expanding multi-cultural community during a period of social unrest and economic downturn; and the creation of a new tourist attraction for the city's post-industrial regeneration scheme. The Bradford phenomena represented a microcosm for all these forces, and Godwin's, role of Fellow at the museum ten years after *Remains of Elmet*, placed her at the centre of the final stage of British culture's reversal out of monochrome and into colour.

Godwin's progress, during the intervening decade, can be measured in the changes presented in '*Abel Cross*' (1977) and '*Untitled*' [*Park Entrance*], *Bradford* (1986-7), in which she had moved her eye from the sacred past to the profane present (figs 147, 1). Following the success of *Land* (1985), and her turn to environmental campaigning, she was in a much stronger, more confident position to experiment in Bradford, a city in the process of regeneration, which also offered her similar opportunities regarding possibilities for a new direction in her photography. In the second image she introduced vibrancy through colour, people and humour rather than

⁶⁷² D. Jarman, *Chroma*, Random House, 1995, p.124

⁶⁷³ The NMPFT relaunched under the new name of National Media Museum in 2006, I will be referring to it as the NMM from this point forward.

the haunting austerity and drama that had characterised much of her ‘*Calder Valley*’ series. Her introduction of a more palpable sense of humour had been a conscious development around the turn of the decade, with journalist, Robert Haas observing: ‘*Fay admits that the photographs she has taken prior to Romney Marsh have been in a more serious vein...“There was no humour in my Ridgeway pictures...whereas in the Romney Marsh...there is quite a lot.”*’⁶⁷⁴ Suggestibly, this greater levity in her approach also revealed a growing confidence to include her own opinion without appearing didactic, and widened the scope of the subject being portrayed. Here then, the municipal furniture of the park created a different sort of entry onto a more familiar urban setting, yet was still able to be transformed by the seasonal colour and light that flooded through it, making it somehow reminiscent of the celestial sunburst in Heptonstall Backlit, (fig 32). The receding figures, of dog walkers and their charges added a comical touch, as the latter were probably the last contributors to the urine stained concrete pillars sitting centre stage, reducing them to a more humble, and utilitarian version of their earlier counterparts in ‘*Abel Cross*’. Godwin’s colour photography was not represented in Roger Taylor’s list of important works, indeed there was only ever one small self-published book dedicated to it, late in her career: *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1999). This originated from her ‘personal work’ pursued throughout the ‘80s and ‘90s, yet was ultimately shaped by her Bradford experience, which Taylor described as ‘*a pivotal moment, and from here all sorts of other things began to happen in her life.*’⁶⁷⁵ Therefore this chapter will explore the significant change that took place during the second half of Godwin’s career from 1987-2005, a period in which she moved further away from the conventions of black and white documentary, and into the more creative realms of colour.

As has been established earlier, the profile of British photography changed significantly during the 1980s, both in the way it was practised, and how it was viewed and employed by other sectors of society. For fine art photographers, it progressed from being something of a ‘two-horse race’ between social documentary and landscape, by opening its aesthetic possibilities to a much wider field of contenders. The introduction of colour, and extending parameters on subject matter meant current practitioners were beginning to break free from the constraints of

⁶⁷⁴ R. Haas, *Fay Godwin*, *Camera* Aug’81, p.18, ‘Newspaper Reviews’ file, FGA, BL

⁶⁷⁵ R. Taylor, Interview with author, 16.05.05

previous decades, and compete more consciously with artists using photography, as well as the annual wave of college graduates joining a photographic community on ever reducing resources. Examples of these changes were touched on in the previous chapter, such as the reference to Paul Graham's desire to dissolve the barrier between documentary and landscape in his early projects. And from a non-photographic perspective, I also showed how other interest groups, such as CPRE and the Ramblers, had picked up on the rising status of photography to promote their respective causes. Other arenas where photography was expanding would include: education, galleries, and new magazines such as '*The Face*' and '*i-D*'; Val Williams described them as '*...the conduit for a new kind of photographer, who crossed the boundaries between fashion and documentary.*'⁶⁷⁶

Additionally, I have previously discussed the loss of status, or fashionability of the black and white landscape genre. How practitioners such as John Blakemore were affected by those events, and how Godwin had pre-empted some of the changes by focussing on environmental issues in her work. However, she was also affected by the pace of new developments, and revealed aspects of her insecurity through a lack of academic training (even at the height of her success) by admitting to one reporter: '*Sometimes I get the feeling there's something I should know about aesthetics, which I don't... Other photographers seem to have a better theoretical idea of what they're doing. I still work instinctively, feeling my way along, and can never seem to find the words to describe what's going on, what's happening in a picture, why one works and another doesn't...*'⁶⁷⁷

Even before the significant success of *Land* (1985), Godwin had begun the process of exploring other directions in which to move her career. For example, Paul Hill recalled her conversations about the gathered detritus and general visual allure of allotments with the photographer, Mike Harper at '*The Place*'.⁶⁷⁸ Some similarities can be seen between Harper's images of upright and stacked panes of broken glass from '*Albert's Garden, Bingley, West Yorkshire*' (1982) and her '*Untitled*', from the

⁶⁷⁶ V. Williams and S. Bright, '*The Urge to Document*', *How We Are*, p.139

⁶⁷⁷ F. Godwin, Interview with Rob Powell, '*Art of Survival*', *Photography North West*, 1985 (np), 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

⁶⁷⁸ P. Hill, Interview with author, 01.10.05

'*Pioneer Nursery*' series, 1984.⁶⁷⁹ (Figs 148, 149) Here, there is a play between ideas of transparency and opacity, and in Godwin's case, reflections. There is also the real struggle between life and death with the vegetation being either protected, or trapped beneath the layers of glass in extremes of temperature, or space. And notions of 'survival' via 'mutation' are suggested as plants alter their normal growth pattern to survive against the odds imposed by man. For his part, Harper went on to develop his theme about nature reclaiming old territory in a project about redundant '*Cumbrian Slate Quarries*', where he spoke of enjoying work in '*areas of containment...bounded areas...[showing] the re-establishment of "Landscape"...*'⁶⁸⁰ Conversely, Godwin kept this work as experimental and recreational throughout the '80s, although clearly, one can appreciate how this subject matter fitted in with her own attraction to the regenerative potential of the post-industrial landscape, given her previous work in '*Remains of Elmet*' (1979) and *Saxon Shore Way* (1983), and its laying the groundwork for *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1998).

During an interview in 1983, Godwin reiterated a desire to determine her own direction in photography by stating, '*I resent being typecast*', and that as she was no longer supporting her family she was ready to move on in her career.⁶⁸¹ As mentioned in the previous chapter, part of her plans included the American Market, the 'Cross-Channel' project, and she was also anticipating some work in mainland Europe. However, amongst the many offers she received, including those already discussed, one invitation ensured her focus remained within the British Isles – the Fellowship at the NMM, (1987-8).

As Roger Taylor noted, the choice of subject for Godwin's Fellowship registered another recognised turning point in her career as she chose to photograph Bradford and its outlying regions in colour. As an alternative, she had also suggested a project in black and white, which was to return to Hebden Bridge in order to observe the changes introduced by tourism, specifically in the wake of *Remains of Elmet* (1979).

⁶⁷⁹ Harper's picture was part of a series of three included in a multi-group exhibition: 21.06-07.09.85, in J. Bayer and A. Noble, '*Image and Exploration: Some Directions in British Photography 1980/85*', *The Photographers' Gallery*, 1985, p.92

⁶⁸⁰ Harper's 'quarry' images were part of a group commission for the *Photographic Gallery* at the *Brewery Arts Centre*, 1984, also see '*And The North*', *Creative Camera*, No.229, January 1984. For details of Harper's work, see pp.1227-9,

⁶⁸¹ F. Godwin Interview by Vicky Cosstick '*Camera Angles*', *Guardian Women*, 01.02.83,

Hebden Bridge was still in the process of a long metamorphosis from being a redundant mill town to becoming a centre for artistic, and alternative lifestyle activity. The subject/ethics of post-industrial tourism were at the time under the scrutiny of authors such as Patrick Wright (*Living in an Old Country*, 1985) and Robert Hewison (*The Heritage Industry*, 1987), and this is a subject I will return to shortly. As with her move into environmental matters, Godwin's change to colour was not immediate, but it was a course from which she only subsequently deviated to fulfil previous contracts, and a small number of new landscape projects requiring black and white images.⁶⁸² The decision to photograph in colour also fulfilled the criterion that the museum's first keeper, Colin Ford, had in mind when he organised the post, he recalled:

*It was always part of my idea for the resident fellowship that we should try...to encourage an established photographer...[rather than] a new, or young [one], to...do something which they'd never done before. And it was Fay's idea...[she] said, 'I want to get into colour'...for her that was the main thing. It is an extraordinary change in her style, it's not just from black and white to colour, but she's photographing totally different things, in a totally different way; and that really surprised me quite a lot.*⁶⁸³

The Bradford Fellowship scheme was set up in 1985, and Godwin was the second person invited to participate following Raghubir Singh (1942-1999). In my previous paper on Godwin's move to colour, I proposed that Singh's project – '**Photographs: India & Britain**' (1985-6) made in his signature colour work, meant he took far less of a professional and personal risk than she did.⁶⁸⁴ That is, he was more familiar with both the type of media and the environments in which he was working - an Indian male focussing on the integration of Asian family life in Bradford, and comparing it with aspects of community life in India, which was articulated by him as: '*looking out from the peopled interiors of the Asian community and seeing bits of Britain*

⁶⁸² The list includes: *Our Forbidden Land* (1990), *Thorne Moors*, by Catherine Caufield, with a photographic essay by Fay Godwin, (1991), *Elmet* with Ted Hughes (1994), *The Edge of the Land* (1995), *A Perfect Republic of Shepherds* (1997)

⁶⁸³ Colin Ford, Interview with author, 13.09.10

⁶⁸⁴ G. Alexander, '*Crossing the Landscape*', p.56

Important Note: There will inevitably be some cross-over points with my previous paper, and use of research from that project – all of which will be acknowledged accordingly.

juxtaposed against colourful bits of Asia...' (fig 150, 151).⁶⁸⁵ I also stated that by comparison, Godwin, at the peak of her popular and critical success, had placed herself in a more vulnerable position by entering relatively new terrain – portraying the urban/outskirts of the city, whilst employing new working methods.⁶⁸⁶ Furthermore, a link was made between the two projects based on a Singh's comment made about Bradford being '*a surprising place*' and the initial title of Godwin's exhibition: '*Bradford a surprising place*', which I have since discovered had deeper significance than first understood.⁶⁸⁷ Lastly, I also made a stronger connection between Godwin's polaroids and the *Glasswork & Secret Lives* series, which I still support, however, it effectively relegated the Bradford work to a transitional (albeit still necessary) stage of her turn to colour. In the light of new research I would like to re-present some of my findings on a range of events that affected this period of Godwin's career. In particular, the powerful impulse Godwin exhibited by continuing to explore colour and new vistas, despite reduced critical and popular interest in her new work.

Raising the Colour Bar

Colour had to overcome a number of hurdles before being reintroduced as acceptable fine art photography in the latter decades of the twentieth century. This included its historical connections with commercial or domestic imagery in hyper-real hues, and the need for a reliable technical and economical means of reproducing enduring/archival results. Throughout the 1980s, colour evolved as a new form of visual and predominantly political commentary for British photographers working in a documentary mode. Although, Roger Taylor recalled that as an aesthetic in creative/expressive photography during the early 70s, it was brought to the attention of British photographers by Kodak's scholarships in Rochester (US), as a means of '*making their mark in this country*.'⁶⁸⁸ Two of the candidates, Bill Gaskins and Ken Phillips returned from America with large portfolios, and a body of knowledge to pass onto their students at Derby/Trent, and when Taylor and Phillips moved onto

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid

⁶⁸⁶ I previously established that Godwin had used colour film for her commercial work, and had worked in urban industrial areas in the past. Although these factors are important, neither represents a significant percentage of the work on which her reputation had been established. Thus the Bradford work should be seen as both a challenge and a change of direction.

⁶⁸⁷ G. Alexander, '*Crossing the Landscape*', p.56

⁶⁸⁸ Author in conversation with Roger Taylor, 7.01.13

Sheffield College, it became an established centre for colour photography.⁶⁸⁹ Barry Lane also recalled that '*Sheffield was very much into colour, getting [it]...put on the agenda; Trent was black and white so Sheffield decided it was going to prioritise colour...[and Roger Taylor] was very keen in that direction.*'⁶⁹⁰ In 1980, Sue Davies (Photographers' Gallery) also focussed on the rising interest in colour by organising a group of relatively new photographers, not bound to the documentary mode, to feature in the '*Salford 80*' International exhibition, Manchester, including Paul Graham, Mari Mahr and Sunil Gupta.⁶⁹¹ Another member of the team was Oliver Bevan, a British painter who had successfully crossed into colour photography during the late '70s.⁶⁹² Bevan was to play an interesting role in Godwin's return to painting during the next decade and this subject will be looked at in greater detail towards the end of the chapter.⁶⁹³

'New American colour' was announced in Britain at the beginning of the '80s with its celebration of the unremarkable, and nondescript ephemera of day-to-day living. Ian Jeffrey's opening comment in his review of the ICA's '*New American Colour Photography*' exhibition declared it to be '*Big, beautiful and brainless*', later adding: '*In the old days...before...1975, pictures like this would have been unthinkable...the result of inadvertence: no human interest, no melancholic élat, no personality.*'⁶⁹⁴ Jeffrey's largely negative assessment of the show revealed something of the cultural gap existing between America's pattern of progress and British resistance to the new language of colour during this period, which would accompany it from a mainly formalist and narrowly defined activity, to a more experimental pursuit unhitching itself from the dominant modes and confines of social documentary and landscape. Some six years later, the British Council's exhibition: '*Inscriptions and Inventions*' (1987), featured the work of ten artists predominantly working in colour.⁶⁹⁵ Here,

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid

⁶⁹⁰ B. Lane and Sue Isherwood, Interview with 11.03.10

⁶⁹¹ S. Davies, '*Photographers' Gallery, Contemporary Colour Photography*', *Creative Camera*, Jul/Aug 1980, p268-9

⁶⁹² A. Le Mée, '*From Abstraction to Figuration - Introductory article to retrospective exhibition catalogue "Un parcours atypique"*', (np)

<http://www.oliverbevan.com/texts/texts-en/annick-retro.html>

⁶⁹³ Ibid

⁶⁹⁴ I. Jeffrey '*New American Colour Photography* at the ICA', *Creative Camera*, Dec 1981, p.283

⁶⁹⁵ I. Jeffrey in B. Rogers and I. Jeffrey, '*Inscriptions and Inventions: British Photography in the 1980s*', The British Council, 1987, featuring: Verdi Yahooda, Peter Fraser, Richard Wentworth, Martin Parr, Jem Southam', Ron O'Donnell, Boyd Webb, Paul Graham, Lawrence Cutting and Keith Arnatt.

Jeffrey's caution was still faintly perceptible in his careful assessment of the properties of colour, in comparison to those of monochrome. On the one hand he spoke appreciatively on its potential to vitalise its subjects, stating, '*Colour...carries more of the breath of the earth, such places cease to be specimen sites only...*'⁶⁹⁶ Whilst on the other hand, he also commented on it being less malleable than black and white: '*Colour reduces to idea less readily than does black and white.*'⁶⁹⁷

One of America's more influential exports to Britain was Sally Eauc Claire's *New Colour Photography* (1981). Many have recalled the effect it had on younger photographers, such as Martin Parr, Paul Graham and Peter Fraser, all of whom had made photographic journeys to America and were drawn in particular to the work of William Eggleston and Stephen Shore.⁶⁹⁸ This was particularly evident in the parallels between Shore and Fraser's '*Flower Bridge*' series (1982), where as David Chandler has shown, Fraser re-presented Shore's '*American culture and history as space*' in the streets of Manchester by '*...weighing its implicit geometries within the photographic frame*', (figs 152,153).⁶⁹⁹ In the case of Jem Southam, it was Paul Graham's enthusiasm for Eggleston's work that rekindled his return to colour photography following a six-year lapse back into monochrome.⁷⁰⁰ Eggleston's imaginative use of the dye-transfer process to produce richly coloured images of everyday objects and events, refashioned the commonplace and gave them a new and unexpected edge. His method was then reworked through British sensibilities, enabling these photographers to produce images that challenged the older, more rigidly imposed boundaries on colour and documentary. More recently, Graham referred to two aspects in particular that attracted him to Eggleston's practice: '*[his] freedom, and his tangential approach to documentary. He doesn't go at it head on...I learnt that you shouldn't go direct to the source – make it elliptical, and appear to be doing something irrelevant which [it] isn't.*'⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid, p.5

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid, p.5

⁶⁹⁸ V. Williams, Interview with author 17.05.05, D. Mellor, *No Such Thing as Society*, p.129

⁶⁹⁹ D. Chandler, *Peter Fraser Photographs 1981-2012*, Tate Publishing, 2013, p.23

⁷⁰⁰ A. Schuman, '*Landscape Stories: an Interview with Jem Southam*', February 2005, *Seesaw magazine*, Issue 2, spring 2005 http://seesawmagazine.com/southam_pages/southam_interview.html

⁷⁰¹ A. Schuman, '*The Knight's Move – in Conversation with Paul Graham*, (np)

By the mid-80s determined attempts were made to establish a British framework for new colour photography to distance it from the American influence. In '*Image and Exploration*' at the Photographers' Gallery, curators, Jonathan Bayer and Alex Noble organised a nationwide search for new or previously '*unsung*' photographers in order to show a distinctly British identity at work.⁷⁰² In Bayer's essay: '*Made in Britain*', he implied or cited familiar national characteristics in his descriptions of the images, in order to strengthen the distinction between them and former American models, such as 'reserved', '*understated*', and '*irony*'.⁷⁰³ Whilst at the same time, he also acknowledged the innovative agent at work in traditional modes of representation to show independent progress in the use of conceptualism and colour.⁷⁰⁴ For Bayer, the strength of colour lay in its subtlety and he urged the viewer to appreciate its role as an equal dimension within the whole, exemplified by Peter Fraser's '*Newquay, Cornwall*' (1984), (fig 154).⁷⁰⁵ Here the portrayal of a partially used consignment of building material has been elevated into something more fascinating, with its range of delicate, if not slightly exotic hues lending it visual allure.⁷⁰⁶ As David Chandler has noted, by this point Fraser's work was more perceptively inspired by Eggleston's approach to colour, yet also complied with a British sensibility in its making.⁷⁰⁷

Some six months later, Susan Butler stated in *Creative Camera* that for British photography in the mid-80s, black and white as a mode of expression had run its course.⁷⁰⁸ Also, that in terms of creative production and public reception, colour was proving a compelling new force for representation in both '*contemporary*' and '*traditional*' styles.⁷⁰⁹ She suggested that even though the credit for validating colour in photography might be laid at the Americans' door, its new possibilities were open to all, and this was being witnessed in various forms in British photography.⁷¹⁰ She concluded, from its long history of the changing landscape, to its current condition in

⁷⁰² J. Bayer and A. Noble (Eds), '*Image and Exploration*', pp. 9-10

⁷⁰³ Ibid, p.10

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid, p.10

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid, p.15

⁷⁰⁶ D. Chandler, *Peter Fraser Photographs 1981-2012*, pp.40

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.39-42

⁷⁰⁸ S. Butler, '*From today black and white is dead*', *Creative Camera*, Dec 1985, *Creative Camera 30 years of Writing*, D. Brittain (Ed.) Manchester University Press, 1999, p.121

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid

⁷¹⁰ Ibid p.122. Also, in my previous paper I noted that William Bishop made a similar argument in his review of the '*New British Colour*' exhibition at the Photographers' Gallery (1986) by establishing a European link via the Surrealists. G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, p.21

the changing socio-cultural, political and economic scene in Britain under Thatcherism, colour had, and would continue to find a seemingly endless source of new expression in the subject.⁷¹¹

It is worth re-emphasising at this point that as with the discussion on *Ten:8* in the previous chapter, Godwin was keenly aware of new developments taking place in photography and the art world in general. Apart from subscribing/contributing articles to a range of photographic journals, she also had a substantial collection of exhibition catalogues and other publications from this period, as a regular visitor to new shows. Lastly, interactions with her assistants and workshop members were a fertile source of current trends and names to watch.

Colour photography – province of the young?

As Godwin pursued her colour close-up work into the next decade (1990s), she realised there was less interest in a new publication or shows of it, whilst a market remained open for her black and white landscapes. She always felt the opposition to her colour work stemmed from the lack of endorsement from critics and agents. Although characteristically, her stock comment on the subject came from a single comment she had received from a student during a workshop, when he allegedly suggested she was ‘too old’ to move into colour.⁷¹² Its regular repetition by Godwin, as a slight on her new work, suggests there was less ongoing discouragement than she perceived, a point confirmed by one of her agents, Zelda Cheadle who stated: ‘*Fay was getting recognition...but what she liked was to be the best, and she didn’t have unanimous support for the colour work, that’s the only difference.*’⁷¹³ This comment certainly revealed more about the artist’s ego, yet on the other hand there was a basis for her views on ageism. In terms of its reception in Britain, colour was predominantly thought of as the language of young photographers, even though as an aesthetic medium, it had been investigated and experimented with since its invention. In William Bishop’s review of the ‘*New British Colour*’ exhibition at the

⁷¹¹ Ibid, p.124

⁷¹² G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp. 65-6, my discussion on ageism was previously discussed in terms of how it manifested itself in her images, such as the neglected sites still supporting growth, interpreted in her colour close-ups through ‘*bandaged...restrained...mutilated forms floating in undetermined or deliberately unqualified space*’, also through ‘*ongoing themes of barriers, now represented by layers of glass, plastic or nets.*’

⁷¹³ Z. Cheadle, Interview with author, 25.07.06

Photographers' Gallery, I have previously noted: '*he...described the independents as "a small army of younger photographers". This does suggest that colour photography was generally perceived as being the province of the new generation of photographers rather than established or mature practitioners.*'⁷¹⁴ Furthermore, I also discussed Godwin's experiments with a Polaroid SX70 from 1979/80, which were described by Roger Taylor to be '*the genesis*' of *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1998).⁷¹⁵ She also acknowledged their influence, noting how '*It was the most creative thing for me...I was in ecstasy doing it; painting gives me the same feeling of being completely outside of myself...*'⁷¹⁶

However, it is also true that most serious photographers had long been 'educated' against its use in non-commercial images. Taking a representative example, in James L. Enyeart's discussion of Ansel Adams' colour photography –Enyeart wrote of the historical and elitist basis for the prejudice that Adams had inherited (and failed to overcome entirely), from nineteenth century practitioners who had set the ground rules for its rejection on aesthetic values in photography as a creative expression.⁷¹⁷ For Godwin, who had built her reputation on the production of fine art black and white prints, and having made known her distaste for the use of colour in landscapes – the '*beautiful Britain*' images, she also had to disengage herself from a similar mindset by expressing her opinions on its redefined values in photography. Interestingly, as late as 1985, she was still expressing strong concerns on colour film's archival properties over the more established status of monochrome, this being revealed in an interview with Colin Ford. On the one hand it showed both her technical and business interests protecting the reputation of her fine art work, particularly on the eve of the launch of *Land*, whilst on the other, it showed her preferences to explore colour in a different genre to landscape.⁷¹⁸

⁷¹⁴ G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.21-2

⁷¹⁵ R. Taylor, '*Topographer with Attitude*', p.18.

Constraints of space have meant I will not be revisiting the relationship between Godwin's polaroids and the '*Glassworks and Secret lives*' series, for further information I recommend my chapter '*The Polaroids*' in G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.19-24

⁷¹⁶ G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.19-24, original quotation from V. Khuri and J. Staples, '*An Interview with Fay Godwin*', *Journal of London Independent Photography*, April 2000, pp. 3 & 5

⁷¹⁷ J. L. Enyeart, '*Quest For Color*', *Ansel Adams in Color*, Little Brown and Co, 1993, pp.12-16

⁷¹⁸ C. Ford, Interviewing Fay Godwin '*Every Bump is Suspect*', BBC Radio3, 1985, GFA

In David Brittain's review of Godwin's Bradford exhibition, he referred to the part that contemporaries had played in her decision to experiment with colour in her own practice. '*Her resistance to colour vanished after the quality of prints being exhibited by younger photographers like Martin Parr.*'⁷¹⁹ Interestingly, Anthony Stokes, Godwin's gallery agent, recalled her ambition to move into colour earlier in the decade.⁷²⁰ He believed she was looking at the work of a range of other artists including William Eggleston, Paul Graham, Maureen Paley and Sharon Kivland, who all used 35mm for casual images of every day items, and were operating in '*the grey area between fine art and photography as straightforward photographic work*', which is where Stokes believed Godwin wanted to anchor her colour work.⁷²¹ Stokes, a renowned supporter of avant-garde artists, had promoted Kivland's work at his gallery, as well as it being part of the *Photography as Medium* (1981) exhibition (referred to in chapter one). In her summary of Kivland's work, *Cocktails* (1978), Teresa Gleadowe referred to its deliberately amateur-like finish: '*blurred images taken most often with an instamatic camera, incompetent to describe the objects photographed...ignoring compositional conventions*' (fig 155).⁷²² Colour, Gleadowe observed was '*the crux of her work*' focussing the eye on the surface '*a flat field on which form and colour are disposed*'⁷²³ In this instance, Gleadowe was not directly comparing Kivland's work to Eggleston's, which at that time was only seeping into the awareness of British photographers, however, there are some strong similarities in terms of apportioning democratic values to all constituents of the image.

One conspicuous exception to the ageism argument is Keith Arnatt. Approximately one-year Godwin's senior, he also started to work in colour during the second half of the '80s. His first colour projects, *Miss Grace's Lane* and *The Open Door* (1986-7) were made after they had both completed their separate commissions on *The Forest* (1985-6), which just preceded her fellowship year in Bradford.⁷²⁴ As with Godwin

⁷¹⁹ D. Brittain, '*Fay Godwin's Colour Change*', *Amateur Photographer*, 12.03.88, pp. 62-3, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

Godwin repeated similar versions on the many occasions she explained her move to colour, for example in my own interview with her she stated: '*obviously I see what's going on...I saw other photographer's colour work and thought, "ah, that's interesting"*', F. Godwin, interview with author 27.07.04

⁷²⁰ A. Stokes, Interview with author, 15.07.05

⁷²¹ Ibid

⁷²² T. Gleadowe, '*Sharon Kivland*', *Photography as Medium*, British Council exhibition, 1981, np

⁷²³ Ibid

⁷²⁴ I. Walker, '*Between Seeing and Knowing*', *Keith Arnatt: Rubbish and Recollections*, 1989 p.19

from the start of the decade, Arnatt's depictions of his local landscape – the Wye Valley, contained an environmental charge with a politicised edge that became more pronounced with time. Interestingly, where the focus really appears to have fused was in their respective colour close-up work: Arnatt's *Pictures from a Rubbish Tip* (1988) and Godwin's *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1989-95). Here the reduction of scale, and introduction of colour adds a painterly dimension to the images, which initially both deceives and delights the eye by presenting 'jewel-like' representations of found objects, before reality registers, with – in Arnatt's work – a ripple of revulsion.⁷²⁵

In my previous paper on Godwin's move to colour, I commented on the striking 'visual similarities' between her and Arnatt's respective projects, and I will now briefly re-visit and expand on that discussion.⁷²⁶ Clearly both artists were concerned with the disintegration of discarded matter as it gradually degenerated into the earth. Many (myself included), have drawn comparisons between their excursions into the processes of decay with seventeenth century still-life paintings, for example, Clare Grafik noted how having made a study of the 'history, origins and logic' of the *vanitas* tradition its effects could be seen to 'permeate' Arnatt's images.⁷²⁷ In Godwin's case, my argument for the still-life connection included profound personal and professional changes that had imposed a new order in her life, causing her to reflect, amongst other matters, on her own mortality (once again); and this is a subject I will return to in greater detail later in this chapter.⁷²⁸

Additionally, I also stated that these different interpretations of Godwin and Arnatt's work pointed to certain 'fundamental differences [that] separated their intellectual approach and artistic style.'⁷²⁹ Arnatt's formal training would surely have informed the many ways he responded to the 'aesthetics of garbage', not only through his deliberate nod to the conventions of painting, but also via the performative function of

⁷²⁵ R. Taylor, 'Topographer with Attitude', in F. Godwin, *Landmarks*, p.18. Here Taylor is specifically referring to Godwin's polaroids and their 'descendants' the *Glassworks and Secret Lives* images.

Also see I. Walker, 'Between Seeing and Knowing', p.19, in which he quoted Arnatt's own descriptions of his colour work as 'small jewels'

⁷²⁶ G. Alexander, 'Crossing the Landscape', pp.60-1

⁷²⁷ C. Grafik, 'Keith Arnatt, Context', *I'm a Real Photographer*, p.137

⁷²⁸ G. Alexander, 'Crossing the Landscape', pp.62-5

⁷²⁹ Ibid, pp.60-1

his subject. That is, it can be seen to relate – either by coincidence or design, to his early work as a conceptual artist interacting with the land.⁷³⁰ In his previous work, he sank people and objects – to varying degrees, into the ground, and challenged viewers’ comprehension and imaginations with his subterranean illusions, such as *‘Liverpool Beach Burial’* (1968), *‘Self Burial’* (*Television Interference Project* - 1969) and *‘Mirror Lined Pit’* (*grass bottom* – 1968), the wider concept of which has also been linked to notions of *‘memento mori’*.⁷³¹ Lastly, as Ian Walker and Martin Caiger-Smith have pointed out, by focussing on waste matter as the substance of his images, he also identified himself with other leading twentieth century artists: *‘Schwitters and Rauschenberg’*, and the work of British sculptors: *‘Bill Woodrow and Stuart Brisley...David Mach and Tony Cragg.’*⁷³²

On the other hand, I previously suggested that Godwin’s engagement with the neglected sections of greenhouses and gardens should be understood as part of an empirical approach to her work.⁷³³ That is, the images incorporated aspects of her physical experience as a walker and environmental campaigner, as well as someone who had long invested an emotional relationship with the restorative properties of nature and the land.⁷³⁴ Godwin’s images are certainly less provocative than Arnatt’s, but no less complex in their dense composition and visual accessibility. Her colours are generally more subtle – in contrast to his preference for the intensity of chroma, and therefore solicit a mellower response, which in turn enables a completely different thought process about possible meanings. Bearing in mind Godwin’s long association with the literary world, it is difficult not to impose, or at least search for some poetic or dramatic reference in her work. Indeed Ian Jeffrey cast it in a classical mode from the outset of his essay accompanying her publication: *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1998).⁷³⁵ Interestingly, Jeffrey’s reference to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*

⁷³⁰ Ibid

⁷³¹ N. Alfrey, J. Sleeman, B. Tufnell, *‘Keith Arnatt’, ‘Artists’, Uncommon Ground: Land Art in Britain 1966-1979*, p.16

Similar connections were also made by Martin Caiger-Smith in *‘Convulsive Landscapes’, ‘Rubbish and Recollections’*, p.33

⁷³² I. Walker, *‘Between Seeing and Knowing’*, p.19, and M. Caiger-Smith, *‘Convulsive Landscapes’, ‘Rubbish and Recollections’*, p.33

⁷³³ G. Alexander, *‘Crossing the Landscape’*, pp.60-1

⁷³⁴ Ibid, p.60-1

⁷³⁵ I. Jeffrey, Essay (untitled) in F. Godwin’s *Glassworks and Secret Lives*, Stella Press, 1998, pp. 7-12

addressed both the transformative aspect of the visual journey through Godwin's images, as well as the less anticipated changes in the direction of her work.

Arnatt's work attracted a strong following with emerging photographers, challenging as it did traditions of the picturesque, and the representation of landscape in particular. In contrast to Godwin he was unencumbered by a back catalogue of work associated with Romanticism. His exhibition: '*Keith Arnatt: Rubbish and Recollections*' (1989) predated *Glassworks and Secret Lives* by approximately seven years – which did not receive its first major showing till The Mead Gallery, (Warwick, 1995). Undoubtedly Godwin would have been aware of Arnatt's colour close-ups, and she may well have seen the exhibition at the Photographers' Gallery. My research has yielded no record of Godwin discussing his work, nor her views on it, making it difficult to comment on its potential impact on her own experiments. However, as has already been established her investigation of the nursery detritus began around 1984, and her first colour versions followed the Bradford Fellowship. In addition, my previous paper noted that while she acknowledged similar ground being covered by other photographers, she was also of the opinion that her interpretation of the subject was uninfluenced by their work, stating:

*I find that by looking at work one begins to see the threads that are emerging. I got very excited about these pictures. I hadn't seen anything like them before. Of course in the end everyone's done something similar. But they were different enough for me to feel that this was nothing that I had cottoned on to from somewhere else; they came out of me...I see them as being extremely personal work.*⁷³⁶

Re-treading Footsteps to the Industrial North

By representing contemporary urban life in Bradford, Singh and Godwin were also following another well-trodden literary and photographic tradition. In the first case, Margaret Drabble wrote about its terrible fascination for writers from the dawn of the Industrial Revolution stating: '*The industrial scene has always had its admirers. Even today, when it is more common to hear complaints about pollution and destruction of our national heritage, there are many who gain aesthetic pleasure from*

⁷³⁶ G. Alexander, '*Crossing the Landscape*', pp.61-2

*the sight of cooling towers, factory chimneys, pylons, radar stations...*⁷³⁷ Drabble's many examples range from the earliest literary champions, whose works preceded the environmental crisis that was to lay waste to much of the hitherto healthy landscape. In general, these observers saw the exciting reshaping of the economic, as well as the physical landscape for the common good: the poet John Dyer's: *The Fleece* (1757), and Arthur Young's: '*A Six Months' Tour through the North of England*' (1770) are both quoted as examples of '*the golden age of hope...when the man of sensibility had not yet learned to scorn the notion of manufacture.*'⁷³⁸ As the chapter proceeds towards the mid-twentieth century, Drabble showed how cross-referencing between different sections of the Arts helped create today's literary device for describing the artist's response to 'the grim North'. As already demonstrated, her references to Burke's theory of the sublime and its Miltonic influence provided a ready narrative for the imposing properties of the inhospitable landscape, and could be vividly illustrated by the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch, Roger Van der Weyden and John Martin.⁷³⁹

Some of Drabble's examples of authors drew on their personal experience such as DH Lawrence and Alan Sillitoe, whereas others were drawn to it through a fascination with 'the other', for example WH Auden and George Orwell, but all created a mindset/criteria for subsequent artists to approach the North in the post-industrial era.⁷⁴⁰ In recent times, historian, Dave Russell has shown how effectively this cultural imaging has proven a springboard for modern representations of Northern cities.⁷⁴¹ His analysis of the ways in which Bradford was re-launched as a tourist destination during the last decades of the twentieth century, considered the *pro et contra* of its re-generation strategy. For example, following the spate of riots in the early '80s, the city became a '*magnet for "condition of England" travel writers...journalists and social commentators*'; he noted all employed a degree of historical stereotyping in their physical descriptions, with the worst affecting a '*sepulchral, doom-laden tone that larded much of this state of the nation commentary.*'⁷⁴²

⁷³⁷ M. Drabble, *A Writer's Britain*, p.195

⁷³⁸ Ibid p.198

⁷³⁹ Ibid, p.198, p208 and p.233

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid, pp.217-

⁷⁴¹ D. Russell, '*Selling Bradford: Tourism and Northern Image in the Late Twentieth Century*', *Contemporary British History*, 2003, 17:2 49-68, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13619460308565443>

⁷⁴² Ibid pp.57-8 also see p.62

In the second case – that of the photographers, Graham Harrison drew on J.B. Priestley's book *'English Journey'* (1934). He cited it as a visual prompt for successive generations attempting to express their views of the industrial and post-industrial landscape: *'Priestley's account of a nation in decline was to influence political thought in Britain for decades and inspire photographers as important as Bill Brandt and Humphrey Spender to venture to the unfashionable north to capture on film the industrial landscapes and the lives of the working people.'*⁷⁴³ Prior to the NMM opening in Bradford, Don McCullin visited the city on a number of occasions to document his own impressions of the impoverished North.⁷⁴⁴ In a recent interview, McCullin spoke of his admiration for Brandt, in particular the 1930s 'Northern project', and the profound influence that it had on him during his trips to the region.⁷⁴⁵ In Harrison's discussion of Brandt's images he stated, *'...the black and white images are among [his] most dark and graphic work, and they match J.B. Priestley the writer at his descriptive best.'*⁷⁴⁶ From McCullin's perspective, Bradford was a photogenic city that availed him many opportunities to work there: *'There was nothing you couldn't do in Bradford. The people were lovely, they were kind and they were almost dragging me in to photograph them.'*⁷⁴⁷

Arguably, McCullin's ability to inject a stronger sense of reality into his images, than his mentor, sprang from personal experience – the hardship of his youth. This subject was referred to during an interview by John Tusa in 2002, whilst discussing McCullin's early Bradford images, one in particular being: *'Bradford GB 1978'* where four young children had been depicted, sitting upright in beds, in a dilapidated room, fully clothed and smiling into the camera (fig 156).⁷⁴⁸ Tusa, who noted both the intimacy of the image as well as its realism, remarked: *'...they're not looking terribly*

⁷⁴³ G. Harrison, *John Angerson's English Journey, Photohistories: The Photographers' History of Photography*, 20.07.12, Harrison was referring to Brandt's essays in *Picture Post* and Spender's Mass Observation project: 'Worktown'

<http://www.photohistories.com/Photo-Histories/53/john-angersons-english-journey?pg=all>

⁷⁴⁴ McCullin made a series of images in 'the north from the mid-60s onwards, his Bradford images hail from the early 70s, and 1978, <http://www.contactpressimages.com/photographers.html>

⁷⁴⁵ **The John Tusa Interviews with Don McCullin**, BBC Radio 3, 03.02.02, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00nc93j>

⁷⁴⁶ Graham Harrison, discussed Brandt's *'Hail, Hell and Halifax'*, *Lilliput*, 1948 in *'John Angerson's English Journey, Photohistories: The Photographers' History of Photography*, 20.07.12

⁷⁴⁷ D. McCullin referring to his 1978 trip to Bradford, as part of the *In England* exhibition, 08.05.09-27.09.09, Video-Bradford, NMM

<http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk/nmem/exhibitions/donmccullin/video2.asp>

⁷⁴⁸ **The John Tusa Interviews with Don McCullin**

*poor; but you can smell, at least I can, the damp, the cold, the poverty here...*⁷⁴⁹

McCullin replied that was absolutely as he had intended, as the scene (and other similar ones) sprang from his own childhood experience, *'I grew up in a room like that as a boy...poverty to me, was nothing strange. I walked into those houses in Bradford...I was possibly, the best possible person to go in there and record those scenes, because I knew what it was all about.'*⁷⁵⁰

The olfactory response evoked by some of McCullin's Bradford images recall sections of George Orwell's *'The Road to Wigan Pier'* (1937), rather than Priestley's *English Journey*. In a comparative study of both texts, Daniel Frampton distinguished the former as a road rendered more 'torturous' by Orwell's determination to inhabit his subjects' world by stating: *'Only by his closeness to such people could Orwell make such observations. More so than Priestley, Orwell had an eye for the smaller details...in part a result of his being more embedded in the lives of his subjects, for a greater length of time.'*⁷⁵¹ Thus, in McCullin's image there is an empathy that springs from his own identification with the scene he was simultaneously witnessing, recording and reliving. And whereas Orwell did succeed in conveying the abject poverty he experienced in his journey to the north, it has to be remembered that it was more from the perspective of 'a convert and a penitent' earning contrition through his confession. Or put another way, his discussion of what made working class life in industrialised areas smell so awful, ranged from the external 'stench' of Sheffield's steel industry, to the more personal results of poor diet and health.⁷⁵² He recalled his middle class upbringing, which taught him to feel both superior, as well as *'despise the lower classes'* largely because *'they smell'*.⁷⁵³

However, McCullin's approach to scenes of hardship and its effects also came under some scrutiny regarding his post-industrial representations of England, and the North in particular. One view expressed by Susan Mitchell and Martin Parr, whilst

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid

⁷⁵¹ D. Frampton, *'J.B. Priestley and George Orwell: Two English Journeys in the 1930s'*, 07.09.12 <http://goshandgolly.wordpress.com/2012/09/07/j-b-priestley-and-george-orwell-two-english-journeys-in-the-1930s/>

⁷⁵² G. Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, Penguin Classics, 2001, p.98. Orwell's views on dietary, health and pollution concerns were related on pp.84-90 & 98-101 respectively

⁷⁵³ Ibid, p.119, also see pp122-3 for Orwell's explanation of his redefined ideas about class distinctions

reviewing his publication: *Homecoming* (1979), described his ongoing bleak and oppressive portrayal of the industrial north as a ‘*disappointment*’ containing ‘*visual clichés: the wet cobbled streets and flat caps of Bradford and Consett, with chimneys belching out smoke in the background.*’⁷⁵⁴ Yet his vision of British life through an abject lens was not altogether inconsistent with many other photographers of the era, including some aspects of Godwin’s work – discussed in *The Saxon Shore Way* (1983).⁷⁵⁵ As part of a six-person group exhibition, ‘*Britain in 1984*’ his images portrayed the homeless or vagrant ‘residents’ of Whitechapel, in which most of the entrants’ images reflected the Orwellian theme in their dystopian view of the nation. Additionally, it was also the early years of Thatcher’s second term, when civil unrest loomed in the South at Greenham Common, and in the North with the onset of the §Miners’ strike. Unemployment was at a record high, and the wealth stayed predominantly with the wealthier as the Tories’ programme of privatisation took off with the sale of British Telecom. Ian Jeffrey’s first response to the show was: ‘*Perhaps it should be nuked on compassionate grounds this Britain of dole offices and failed buildings.*’⁷⁵⁶

‘Bradford – A Surprising Place’

Godwin’s exhibition of the images made throughout her fellowship year was initially entitled: ‘*Bradford – A Surprising Place*’. It was used briefly for her final exhibition – before being changed, eventually, to ‘*Fay Godwin: Bradford in Colour*’. I will be returning to this discussion shortly, but firstly, I would like to explore the origins of the former title and its significance for the city. ‘*Bradford – A Surprising Place*’ was the slogan used by Bradford Metropolitan Council’s campaign; it was developed during the late ‘70s to promote the city as a desirable urban and rural tourist destination. Therefore her decision to use it in connection with the multicultural aspect of Bradford, its citizens and its changing economy, referenced her work in

⁷⁵⁴ S. Mitchell and M. Parr, ‘*Books received*’ *Creative Camera*, May/June 1980, p.202

Daniel Frampton made similar observations in his discussion of Orwell’s work: ‘*Orwell’s Road to Wigan Pier, especially, has become the defining account of depression-era Britain - the danger being that, in some instances, it may be employed as the only evidence. As Priestley’s work shows, particularly in To The End, England was a country of varying degrees, and not every view was as disturbing as Orwell’s.*’ (np – comment at end of article)

⁷⁵⁵ McCullin’s approach must of course be seen also through his photojournalism past, in global warzones, and the indelibly negative effects those experiences have etched on him, which have regularly been discussed in other areas of his photography such as his landscapes.

⁷⁵⁶ I. Jeffrey, ‘*Bits of Britain in 1984*’, *Creative Camera*, July/August 1984, p.1433

other arenas including early approaches to ‘post-colonial’ and ‘post-industrial tourism’ studies. Other observers of the period pursuing these disciplines more assiduously included the travel writer, Dervla Murphy: *Tales from Two Cities* (1987), and, as mentioned earlier, the cultural historian Patrick Wright.⁷⁵⁷ In Murphy’s case, her brief residency in Manningham in 1985 conveyed her impressions (mainly based on her understanding of the experience of the expanding migrant Mipuri/Pakistani community), on how the city’s different generations were coping with mass unemployment, and rising racial tension.⁷⁵⁸

In the case of Wright, his findings took a national sweep as well as focussing on specific locations. In his work, he questioned the historical truths and ethics upon which modern versions of Britain’s past were being re-presented to a viewing and/or paying public; including the influence of television, and ‘an ongoing diet of conservation’; he saw both as stifling agents of cultural progress.⁷⁵⁹ The debate Wright joined engendered wider discussions about ‘the way in which British, and other European cities, invested in cultural activities to regenerate their economies in the post-industrial era’. Although Dave Russell (in addition to his earlier comments regarding travel writers), surmised that the influence of publications such as Wright’s, and Robert Hewison’s *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (1987), may also have proved detrimental to the burgeoning tourist economy of northern cities: ‘*the heritage debate cast a certain pall over all efforts at the “re-branding” and re-thinking of industrial communities.*’⁷⁶⁰ At the heart of the slogan: ‘*Bradford – A Surprising Place*’ there was a concerted effort by the Council’s Economic Development Unit – ‘The Myth-breakers’, to draw heavily on the wider attributes of the city, and its environs in order to redefine Bradford as an attractive destination. With this aim in mind, the campaign was vigorously promoted nationally (and internationally) by all available channels so would have had broad and deep

⁷⁵⁷ Additionally, the BBC commissioned author, Beryl Bainbridge to follow the footsteps of JB Priestly’s *English Journey* on the 50th Anniversary of its publication. Her chapter on Bradford focussed mainly on current debates about co-education and its divisive effect on the city’s female Asian population. B. Bainbridge, *English journey, or, The road to Milton Keynes*, Duckworth, 1984 pp.105-119

⁷⁵⁸ D. Murphy, *Tales from Two Cities* John Murray, 1987, pp. 5-13

⁷⁵⁹ M. Pfister, ‘*Writing the Obituaries*’: an Interview with Patrick Wright, ‘*The Discovery of Britain*’, a special issue of *The Journal for the Study of British Cultures* (Tübingen, Germany), July 1997, pp.6-7

⁷⁶⁰ D. Russell ‘*Selling Bradford*’, p.60

resonances for its citizens, for example: *'In the late 1970s and early 1980s, [David] Hockney's brother Paul (Lord Mayor of Bradford in 1977) used to put up "Bradford – A Surprising Place" posters in Los Angeles.'*⁷⁶¹ Around the same time a promotional film entitled: *'Bradford – A Surprising Place'* (1981), was aimed at *'illustrating the diversity of Bradford apart from the textiles industry [by] emphasis[ing its] investment in new industry, its cultural and historic heritage and its location near the Yorkshire moors and dales.'*⁷⁶²

Bradford's advantages lay in its legitimate claim to capitalise on the wider *'cultural and historic heritage'* of the outlying villages and moors, which were a result of its widened metropolitan boundaries from 1974.⁷⁶³ And as Russell and others have noted it provided the city with the rich legacies of places such as Haworth Parsonage, Saltaire or more recently, the TV setting for *'Emmerdale'*, from which the rewards were *'prestigious tourist awards in 1982 and 1983.'*⁷⁶⁴ However, the same authors have also commented variously on the questionable localised effects of being subsumed for 'heritage' reasons, by both the village and city residents. Dervla Murphy wrote of Keighly's *'fury...[at] being reduced to vassalage.'*⁷⁶⁵ Whilst Russell commented on the commercial gain over its citizens' sensitivities, stating it was: *'both crucial to the underpinning of the region's tourist experiment and the pretext for its much used slogan...Surprising it truly was for residents of Ilkley, Haworth and elsewhere to see their sites used to stand for the Victorian city down the road...'*⁷⁶⁶ Another retrospective view has been provided by the author, James Procter, he observed the effects this (and subsequent) advertising campaigns had on effectively 'disappearing' the presence of Bradford's burgeoning Asian population. He asserted the ironically named 'myth-breakers' *'reimagine[d] Bradford as a pastoral threshold, the "gateway to the Yorkshire Dales"...replac[ing] the urban landscape of the city itself, the white countryside was allowed to replace the multicultural metropolis as the essential image of Bradford...facilitating a return to*

⁷⁶¹ J. Greenhalf, *'David Hockney at 75'*, *Telegraph and Argus*, 09.07.12

⁷⁶² BFI Film & Database: *'Bradford A Surprising Place'*
<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/747392?view=synopsis>

⁷⁶³ *'Bradford was granted city status on 9 June 1897 and became a metropolitan district council in 1974.'* *'History of Bradford'*, *Visit Bradford*, <http://www.visitbradford.com/things-to-do/history-of-bradford.aspx>

⁷⁶⁴ D. Russell, *'Selling Bradford'*, pp.54

⁷⁶⁵ D. Murphy, *Tales from Two Cities*, p.72

⁷⁶⁶ D. Russell, *'Selling Bradford'* 2003 17:2, pp.53

*an older village England...*⁷⁶⁷ Proctor's point is exemplified by the poster showing Haworth Parsonage under the cover of snow, so not only is the city represented through the literary lens of a bygone period, but also a literal depiction of Bradford as white, (fig 157).

The Role of the Arts in Bradford's Regeneration Programme

In the last thirty years there has been a growing recognition that the display of art forms appear to have an instrumental role in reconnecting communities in trauma, or trapped in economic slumps. In its various forms it is able to provide open forums, where people are encouraged to interact on neutral territory with the long (or short) term aim of solving/transcending a range of societies' ills.⁷⁶⁸ Yet, despite playing a significant role in the success of Bradford's tourism economy, the new museum did not receive unequivocal support from other London institutions.⁷⁶⁹ That is, the parent institution (the Science Museum) was viewed in some quarters to have taken a clandestine approach that also capitalised on the rising status of photography in Britain. *Creative Camera* highlighted this aspect via a series of interviews with representatives from some of the main arts establishments, where conflicting attitudes were revealed about collecting policies.⁷⁷⁰ In Chris Killip's discussion with Roy Strong (Director of the V&A) the latter revealed serious concerns about: aesthetic territory, threats to further dilution of public funds, and retention of viewing figures,

⁷⁶⁷ J. Procter, *Dwelling Places: Postwar black British writing*, Manchester University Press, 2003, pp.172.

Recently, Sarfraz Manzoor observed, 'There was some surprise this year when Bradford was declared by a St George's Day study as one of the three most English places in the country, but it was this "greater" Bradford, that the study was describing, not the actual city.' Sarfraz Manzoor, '*Bradford reflects on many shades of Englishness*', *The Observer*, 05.07.09 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/jul/05/bradford-englishness-jb-priestley>

⁷⁶⁸ A Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report stated 'The recognition of the value of the arts...laid the foundations for more integrated urban re-generation strategies driven by cultural policy imperatives. These strategies were developed during the second half of the 1980s by cities which had recently undergone de-industrialisation. Well-known examples include: Bradford, where the National Museum of Film and Photography and the Alhambra were used to develop the tourism industry.' C. Landry et al, *The Art of Regeneration: Urban Renewal through Cultural Activity* Comedia, 1996, p.30 <http://www.combined-arts.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/indonesia-charleslandry-artofregeneration.pdf>

⁷⁶⁹ S. Bezencenet, '*Photography at Bradford*', in *Photographic Practices: Towards a Different Image*, p107

⁷⁷⁰ C. Osman, '*V&A, TATE, NPG, RPS, ETC*', *Creative Camera*, October 1981, p.245 The programme of interviews were intended to investigate 'the state of photography in this country and its future.'

as well as a deep frustration regarding a perceived lack of transparency.⁷⁷¹ Knowing some of the new museums' issues to be financial as well as directional, he partially expressed his anger through the deprecatory comment, '*I cannot see people travelling up to Bradford, to a disused skating rink, to see a collection of 250 cameras.*'⁷⁷²

Unsurprisingly, Dame Margaret Weston (Director of the Science Museum) spoke of the many advantages of the geographical location. Firstly, it included a high-level sanction as the NMM conformed to the government's programme of devolving the arts to the regions.⁷⁷³ Secondly, not only did it take their new aims for the collections away from a crowded centre, but crucially, Bradford Council's regeneration budget meant the new museum would receive considerable local funding.⁷⁷⁴ In support of the location, Weston stated, '*[The Metropolitan Council of Bradford] are...treating this as a major economic development. What they want to do is bring some people into Bradford; they are working very hard at their tourism too, not without success, and so this fitted into their scheme of things.*'⁷⁷⁵ Strong's oppositional views proved to be ungrounded. In 1988, the Radio 4 arts programme, *Kaleidoscope* discussed the rising popularity of photography in education and as an art form. In his wide sweep of interviews with critics, gallerists, and photographers – including Godwin, presenter John Russell Taylor referred to the NMM as '*one of the great success stories of recent years*'⁷⁷⁶

Godwin's position amongst these debates

Godwin's acceptance of the Fellowship was regarded as something of a coup for the museum, given her celebrated profile in photography at this time.⁷⁷⁷ Her presence there would have been expected to draw press attention and large audiences to the final exhibition. Yet, the original title: '*Bradford a Surprising Place*' proved to be a controversial one with consequences for the promotion, and possibly the theme of the

⁷⁷¹ C. Killip, 'Interview: Roy Strong, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, on V&A Policy and the National Museum of Photography', *Creative Camera*, Oct '81, pp.266-8

⁷⁷² Ibid

⁷⁷³ M. Weston, Interview with Colin Osman's *Interview: The National Museum of Photography, Bradford*, *Creative Camera*, September 1982, p.662

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁷⁶ J. R. Taylor 'Click: the rising success of photography', *Kaleidoscope*, BBC Radio 4 08.07.88, audio cassette recording, GFA

⁷⁷⁷ R. Taylor, in conversation with author, 07.01.13

show. The correspondence file at the museum revealed the city's slogan to be Godwin's personal choice, as Roger Taylor recalled, it was because it had wide possibilities for her experience of the city, as well as the demands of the fellowship.⁷⁷⁸ Firstly, it registered her positive response to Bradford as well as the reconstruction scheme at work on many different levels, and secondly, it was intended to be ironic. In the latter case, she was taking a sideward swipe at the teaching requirements involved in the scheme, which she later described as '*totally unrewarding*' due to inadequate organisation within the fellowship programme.⁷⁷⁹ Although there may have been grounds for Godwin's dissatisfaction, her response provides yet another example of her exacting attitude in matters where individuals or institutions did not work towards her own high standards. Interestingly however, she also posted a detailed report on improvements she thought helpful to her successors, which although can be construed as high-handed, it also recalls her pragmatic nature for offering solutions to problems she encountered.⁷⁸⁰

From Godwin's perspective, the decision to change the title also proved problematic. This was largely because it resulted in the exhibition being promoted under three different headings: in its early stage the Arts Review programme, '*Kaleidoscope*' referred to it as '*Bradford a Surprising Place*'; the press releases were sent out under '*Fay Godwin – In Colour*', and the final title which appeared on the posters was '*Fay Godwin: Bradford In Colour*'.⁷⁸¹ A partial correspondence between Godwin and the NMM's Exhibition Officer, Terry Morden, provides some insights to the incident, as well as its effects on her:

⁷⁷⁸ F. Godwin, letter to Terry Morden, 03.02.88, *NMM Object File 1989-5066*.

Also, author in conversation with Roger Taylor, 07.01.13

⁷⁷⁹ R. Taylor, in conversation with author, 07.01.13

Also L. Sagues review: '*Brightened Bradford*' *Ham and High*, 18.03.88, p.112, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid

⁷⁸¹ '*Bradford A Surprising Place*', *Kaleidoscope*, BBC Radio 4, March(?), 1988, audio cassette recording, GFA

Note: It is an incomplete recording therefore the Presenter's name is unknown, however the review would have taken place around the exhibition's opening: March – 19 June 1988. Two newspaper cuttings in Godwin's archive referred to the second title: '*Fay Godwin – In Colour*', they were L. Sagues '*Brightened Bradford*' *Ham and High*, p.112, also David Brittain's '*Fay Godwin's Colour Change*' *Amateur Photographer*, pp. 62-5, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL. Lastly, the posters are part of the Fay Godwin Archive at the BL.

I was very upset to hear that the museum has sent all the publicity under the exhibition title: “Fay Godwin in Colour”. I really do object to that title, it is totally misleading and weak and wet. My work is about Bradford. I would give way on my own chosen title which was “Bradford a Surprising Place” if it’s inappropriate locally, but loathe “Fay Godwin in Colour”...No wonder the Sunday Times were so puzzled...I have never, in all these years had a title imposed on me by a gallery without first discussing it with me...I abhor the idea of having [been] listed in the BJ etc under this misleading title.⁷⁸²

Morden’s mollifying reply opened with a further play on the word ‘surprise’, suggesting some debate had already been raised about the images. Alternatively, he may have been expressing a personal response before tackling Godwin’s sense of injustice:

I must admit to being surprised when I first started to see the work, only now is its subtlety and gentleness starting to become apparent. I would like to apologise on behalf of the museum for the confusion about the exhibition title...I’m glad we’ve been able to agree on a compromise – personally I think that “Bradford In Colour” is by far the best title. Hopefully the poster will go some way to alleviating the problems caused by our earlier title.⁷⁸³

The importance of these extracts are, firstly, the original title would most likely have governed the way in which Godwin approached her fieldwork. This was mainly completed between April and August 1987, and there would have been some significant consequences in re-naming it; this aspect will be explored through the images. Secondly, it hints at a distinct sensitivity by either the museum, or other official body, on how the images – under the umbrella of the slogan, might affect external perceptions of Bradford. As I have already demonstrated it represented a loaded concept, particularly in terms of the city’s image-makers, therefore her visual representations may have jarred with their marketing specifications. Thirdly, her reference to the Sunday Times’ puzzled response corroborates with my previous paper in terms of the muted reception her exhibition received from critics and her

⁷⁸² F. Godwin, letter to Terry Morden, 03.02.88, *NMPFT Object File 1989-5066*, NMM

⁷⁸³ Ibid

black and white landscape audience.⁷⁸⁴ And lastly, it is further evidence of how Godwin perceived herself at this point in her career, as well as how she was approached by those working with her. That is, she wanted full control of her self-image through the media, as well as reminding the museum of her current standing in the photographic world.

Godwin's approach to the Northern Stereotyping

On the basis of Godwin's early decision to borrow the title, there are a number of points to consider in terms of how she intended it to reflect her visual survey of Bradford. Firstly, given her developing objections towards the theme park approach of the tourism and leisure industry, there is an expectation that aspects of those views would appear in her images.⁷⁸⁵ This would also have reflected current opinion, such as photo critic/author, Amanda Hopkinson demonstrated in her review of John Davies' *'A Green and Pleasant Land'* (1987). Here, she commented on a growing propensity for '*romantic nostalgia*' in relation to the defunct mills, and the reinterpretation of these buildings into '*a part of our idealised heritage as the workshop of the world.*'⁷⁸⁶ In retrospect, Dave Russell's study has cited several examples of the distinctly '*folksy*' approach adopted by Bradford throughout the '80s, which could easily have jarred with Godwin's polemic in *Our Forbidden Land*, such as: '*the city's main tourist brochure began with a celebration of northern "friendliness, generosity and warmth" followed by quotes from the "Yorkshire anthem" "Ilkla Moor Bah tat"*'⁷⁸⁷ Yet as mentioned earlier, from the available evidence it is clear that Godwin's intentions were genuinely more benign towards the city, and she was pleasantly 'surprised' by what she found there. For example, although Roger Taylor recalled her anxiety about being on her own in the city using a camera, he also noted that she was very excited about it, and very alive to Bradford's

⁷⁸⁴ See G. Alexander, *Crossing The Landscape*, pp.23-5

⁷⁸⁵ Godwin made entrepreneurial schemes of '*theme park Britain*' (including Peter de Savary's Lands End and Ken King's unrealised plans for an Elizabethan theme-park at Avebury Manor) one of the main targets of her objections to land misuse in *Our Forbidden Land* (1990), pp.92-3 and p.185. In this last instance her concerns had also been cited by Patrick Wright in '*Sneering at the Theme Parks: An Encounter with the Heritage industry*', Patrick Wright in Conversation with Tim Putnam, 1989. See Appendix One, *On Living in an Old Country* OUP, 2009 p.239

⁷⁸⁶ A. Hopkinson, '*Heaven on Earth*', *Creative Camera*, Dec.'87, p.36

⁷⁸⁷ D. Russell, '*Selling Bradford*: 2003, p.61

vibrancy.⁷⁸⁸ One review quoted her reactions to the city: *'I loved Bradford, I was expecting an awful lot of North-South divide, of inner city dereliction. But it's rated as one of the best cities for quality of life in the country – and that's what I felt.'*⁷⁸⁹

A second, and much wider consideration is the issue of Northern stereotyping by photographers. As mentioned above a tradition had long been established for this kind of approach, and as Britain's social and economic crises deepened in the first half of the decade, themes of its industrial collapse were made the subject of many exhibitions. Two such examples would include: *'And the North'* (1984), (mentioned at the beginning of this chapter in the discussion around Mike Harper), and the Impression's Gallery exhibition: *'Roads to Wigan Pier'* (1984).⁷⁹⁰ In both cases they were group shows, and the photographers were requested to present their impressions of the North. On balance, they were overwhelmingly focussed on the depressing, often alienated conditions being endured, and dealt with, by predominantly working class communities following the closure of core, traditional industries, which had provided jobs for successive generations, as well as the ancillary services and leisure facilities that supported a social life. Thus a strong theme in these projects was the various ways people were coming to terms with the passing of the old ways, and the rising of the new ones. This view of the North-South divide was also promoted in Susan Kismaric's exhibition in *'British Photography from the Thatcher Years'* (1990), in which she quoted an article by Howell Raines' in the *New York Times* (13.05.87) describing England as economically spliced between *'decline and prosperity'* where *'The old industrial cities of central and northern England are pockets of decay, while London and the "home counties" of southeast England surf along on the lead wave of the Thatcher boom.'*⁷⁹¹

Godwin's intentions in Bradford were not only to avoid the accusations of stereotyping, rather to show it as a city in recovery, rich in *'warmth and humanity'*,

⁷⁸⁸ Extract from unedited filmed discussion between Roger Taylor and Colin Hardy, in preparation for the exhibition of *'Fay Godwin: Land Re-visited'*, NMM, 15.10.10 – 27.03.11. My sincere thanks to both parties for giving me a copy of the DVD

⁷⁸⁹ L. Sagues, *'Brightened Bradford' Ham and High*, p.112

⁷⁹⁰ See: *Creative Camera*, No.229, Jan '84, most of the issue was dedicated to the *'And the North'* project. Also, Impressions Gallery, *'Exhibitions Past': '40th Anniversary Exhibition: Roads to Wigan Pier'* <http://www.impressions-gallery.com/exhibitions/exhibition.php?id=50>

⁷⁹¹ S. Kismaric, *'British Photography from the Thatcher Years'*, MOMA publication, 1990, p.11

and for colour to be an important ingredient.⁷⁹² Her approach effectively supported the 'Enterprise Zones' system currently operating across the British Isles, as a means of reigniting economic growth in some of the country's most depressed urban areas.⁷⁹³ *'The Sunday Times Magazine'* endorsement of this development coincided with the first year of Godwin's fellowship, with an entire edition dedicated to the positive impact, and success stories being forged by individual entrepreneurs in six British cities (predominantly in the North, and including Bradford), described as *'Britain's Born Again Cities'*.⁷⁹⁴ As David Mellor observed, a powerful point was also being made for the advent of colour in British photography at this time, albeit tinged by the Murdoch/Thatcher principles implicit in the scheme. The cover image showed a cracked parchment coloured monochrome of a 'Lowry-esque' landscape, juxtaposed with a smooth and brightly coloured view of Manchester's new commercial centre, with the flags of industry replacing the smoking chimneys of the past: *'it was about our new regenerated cities, and...it was about colour singing out...it was a new optic, and it was as if it was the beginning of a new day'* (fig 158).⁷⁹⁵

Godwin's viewpoint came primarily through her original title choice, but also in a critical review she delivered on John Davies' book and exhibition, *'A Green and Pleasant Land'* (1987).⁷⁹⁶ Here she carefully focussed on the present, post-industrial features in his work, and spoke of a sense of *'optimism and beauty'* regarding his use of *'fleeting light'* against a backdrop of Sheffield's high rise flats adding: *'...I think far too much is written about doom and gloom up there.'*⁷⁹⁷ Indeed, Davies' intention had been the visual interrelationship between the physical and social construction of Sheffield's buildings around its main Steel industry.⁷⁹⁸ And his elevated viewpoint enabled a more generous perspective for seeing the city in its best light, making him

⁷⁹² D. Brittain *'Fay Godwin's Colour Change'*, p.64, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

⁷⁹³ S. Jenkins, 'Save our Cities: How to bring new life to the urban heartlands', pp.22-3 *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 29.11.87

⁷⁹⁴ *'Britain's Born Again Cities'*, *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 29.11.87, My thanks to David Mellor for this useful reference

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid, and D. Mellor in discussion with the author, 20.03.13

⁷⁹⁶ F. Godwin's, review of *'A Green and Pleasant Land'* (1987), *Kaleidoscope*, BBC4, March? 1988, audio cassette recording, GFA

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid

⁷⁹⁸ J. Davies, Interview with Susan Butler, *'Landscapes in Transition'*, *Creative Camera*, Nov.'85, pp16-24

feel ‘*uplifted*.’⁷⁹⁹ In his image of ‘*Netherthorpe, Sheffield*’ (1981), the panoramic view of the city with the backdrop of hills and moors beyond endows it with a rural aspect, which is integral to its residents’ history of walking as a leisure pursuit from the nineteenth century onwards, (fig 159).⁸⁰⁰ Here, the showcasing of seven of its high-rise blocks, white facades enhanced by the sunlight, lifted the scene from an otherwise bleak and dreary urban survey of a British Northern cityscape in the death throes of industrial collapse.

By comparison, Godwin’s ‘*Sheep and high rise, Cottingley Bridge*’ (1987), colour, light and shifting patterns of time have been employed to achieve her point in terms of northern beauty without sentimentalising the scene (fig 160). The sunlit concrete tower blocks have been lined up behind a barrier of trees, and emanate a golden-pink glow, which can certainly be interpreted as a firm nod to Davies. And by foregrounding the scene with a field of Jacob sheep, not only has she added more colour to urban banality, but its reference to the pastoral also greatly softened the encroaching Brutalist architecture, allowing it to compete more evenly with the historically acquired elegance of the Victorian brick-built chimney on the left of the frame. Lastly, a suggestion of balance and positivity was conveyed by placing all three elements: the sheep, tower blocks and mill chimney in a triangulated relationship, which enabled a sense of continuity, or even an harmonious link between each era of Bradford’s economic history on its climb back towards prosperity. On a more local level, it also commented on a pleasant outlook for the residents of the tower blocks.

From another perspective, Godwin’s optimistic stance might also be regarded as an exercise in ‘papering over the cracks’. In David Mellor’s discussion of the Davies’ Sheffield panoramas, he referred to the photographer’s ‘...*unsentimental gaze across emptied out spaces, blanched and all disclosing*...’, adding that Sheffield ‘...*was a city decimated by mass redundancies in the steel industry during the winter of 1979/80*...’⁸⁰¹ This more austere look at the human cost reflected in the landscape represented by Davies, corresponded to one related by Dervla Murphy in her text:

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid p.22

⁸⁰⁰ ‘*Sheffield Country Walks*’, ‘*Sheffield Districts & Boudaries*’ in Sheffield Indexers http://www.sheffieldindexers.com/Links/Links_StreetIndexAndMaps.html

⁸⁰¹ D. Mellor, *No Such Thing As Society*, p.110

Tales from Two Cities (1987). On the return journey from Sheffield to Bradford, she described an overriding sense of visual and emotional shock at having seen for the first time the ‘collapse’ of the industrial architecture, enriched by a tale of personal testimony about the process of reconciling the reality of its historical loss.⁸⁰²

Murphy’s retelling of her chance meeting with a redundant steel worker returning from his first grandson’s christening presented a microcosm of the uncompromising reality many families lived at ground level: ‘*Traditionally...the paternal grandfather tears a corner off his own apprenticeship papers and...puts it in the baby’s...fist. His son, also recently made redundant, wanted him to follow this tradition, but he refused. “I told him – That was a custom that meant something, it wasn’t like kissing under the mistletoe. Now it means nothing and we mustn’t pretend. This baby has to fit into a new world, we can’t help him the way we always did before.”*’⁸⁰³

Another aspect of Godwin’s interpretation of Davies’ work must also include a certain measure of self-protection regarding the new directions in her work, and how it broke with stale perceptions of the North. In her review, she tellingly added that although Davies was best known for black and white landscapes, ‘*there are some very beautiful colour photographs...one of Manchester that...looks like Venice, where a whole dock area is being changed into an area with shops, restaurants and leisure pursuits...so it certainly isn’t all pessimistic.*’⁸⁰⁴ Godwin had already spoken out in defence of Martin Parr’s publication ‘*Last Resort*’ (1986). In a wave of negative responses to his ‘*Swiftian*’ observations regarding the New Brighton trippers, she responded to Liz Wells’ descriptions of the work as ‘*a bit grotesque*’ and ‘*unkind*’ under the heading ‘*Why should photography be kind?*’⁸⁰⁵ In doing so, Godwin firmly allied herself with Parr’s right to move forward from his previous work in which she described him as having ‘*explored some of the enduring values of the working class people*’; also describing the images as ‘*wonderfully ironic...with no hint of patronage...*’⁸⁰⁶ Paul Hill interpreted her stout defence of Parr as being very typical, but also noted it was possibly a self-reference to her imminent change of format, as

⁸⁰² D. Murphy, *Tales from Two Cities*, p.48

⁸⁰³ Ibid

⁸⁰⁴ F. Godwin, ‘*A Green and Pleasant Land*’, a/c recording, GFA

⁸⁰⁵ F. Godwin, *Letters, British Journal of Photography*, 26.09.86, p.1104, GFA

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid

well as her being ‘*a middle class southerner [about to document] a working class northern environment.*’⁸⁰⁷

In the final analysis, as well as appreciating all landscape photographers’ honed impulse towards weather and geology as signifiers of wellbeing, there is also Godwin’s own documentary style and attitude to consider. That is, from 1968 to the mid-70s, she had produced different bodies of work on factory/workplace projects and developed her own method of viewing social and labour conditions, and those people enmeshed in, or situated close to the poverty trap. As noted in the discussion of *Chrysanthemums* in chapter one, Godwin’s detached documentary style was more subtly encoded with political meaning, choosing not to represent the human drama in the empathic way that McCullin, or Robert Golden did, nor was she about to emulate Parr’s recently cultivated style in which people displayed an element of complicity in their circumstances. Instead, she focussed on the self-help route of working one’s way up, (or back up) the ladder. This would also have reflected something of her own experiences with her photographic career, and was combined with her vocal support for the current ‘Enterprise’ agenda. As Ian Jeffrey’s somewhat tongue-in-cheek comment revealed, it was a general attitude that permeated sections of Britain during this period: ‘*In the orthodoxy of the 1980s, school-leavers and the unemployed can become small businessmen if they make the effort, give it a go, rise by their own efforts or pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.*’⁸⁰⁸

Building on earlier discussions, these different viewpoints (above) have demonstrated some of the complex issues faced not just by Godwin, but all photographers during this era of change in British life. Photographers, as with all freelance agents/artists, were obliged to adapt to new social attitudes as well as new technologies in order to secure new commissions and survive, which often placed them in an arena of conflict with their established practice or personal beliefs. Added

⁸⁰⁷ Interview with Paul Hill, 1.10.05. Godwin’s defence of Parr might also be seen in the light of his own subsequent admissions, as Brett Rogers noted in her role as Exhibitions Officer for the British Council: ‘Parr openly acknowledges that “photography is a naturally exploitative and voyeuristic medium - rather than trying to hide that fact, I have come to terms with it and accept that is part of what I do.” B. Rogers, ‘*Martin Parr: Home And Abroad*’, 01.01.2000 <http://www.photographer.ru/cult/person/28.htm#.UN9Hl47w4vc>

⁸⁰⁸ I. Jeffrey, ‘*Stories of detection and home-made majesty*’, *Inscriptions and Inventions: British Photography in the 1980s*, B. Rogers and I Jeffrey, British Council publication, 1987, p.7

to this were the changes taking place within photography, as described in my earlier discussion around *TEN:8* and the increasing loss of support for the ‘Stieglitzian/Minor White approach’ to landscape. The advancement of technology was also a propelling force for change, a point that Godwin showed herself to be highly sensitive to, and responded by positioning herself close to the vanguard movement that saw colour offering a new dimension in creative photographic expression. As the old parameters of social documentary and landscape were gradually being eroded, it was entirely permissible to begin working in new territories, or at least interpreting old territories in a new way. Thus for Godwin it was not just about introducing colour, and urban life, into an area of social deprivation without appearing insensitive to the community. Rather it was the more challenging concept of grappling with the unavoidable socio-political issues and commentary this work would inevitably produce. It is also important to recall that in tandem to this project she had begun her research on *Our Forbidden Land* (1990). Arguably, it was into that vast subject that she was focussing much of her empathy (as well as anger), on the poverty and abuse absorbed by the landscape, which had no voice.

Godwin’s ‘bouquet to Bradford’⁸⁰⁹

Godwin’s warmth towards Bradford was fully acknowledged in the reviews of her show. For example, the presenter of *Kaleidoscope* described her pictures as a ‘bouquet to Bradford’, a description confirmed by the critic, Sandra Martin, who stated the images ‘came across as friendly, showing a genuine respect and affection for her subject matter.’⁸¹⁰ Notably, Godwin’s introductory use of colour was recognised favourably within the *Kaleidoscope* discussion, particularly in terms of the urban industrial locations, which Martin noted was more appropriate than black and white.⁸¹¹ However, the wide range of subject matter, in the final exhibition (some sixty-three images in total), also led to comments about Godwin failing to produce an identifiable overall theme – even under the aegis of ‘*Bradford a Surprising Place*’⁸¹² Indeed, her contact sheets showed the great breadth of her investigation, and that she predominantly looked for scenes of leisure and venues, or events that provided it. Thus she recorded river and canal scenes; different aspects of the large Asian

⁸⁰⁹ S. Martin and the Presenter reviewing ‘*Bradford A Surprising Place*’, GFA

⁸¹⁰ Ibid

⁸¹¹ Ibid

⁸¹² The figures are based on Godwin’s ‘*Bradford Consignment List*’ in ‘Consignment File’, BL

community integrating with the rest of the Bradford; sites of new and old infrastructure; and the city's green areas as well as its rural outskirts. As a consequence Martin went onto express a weakness in Godwin's strategy by declaring that, '*it didn't seem to have a coherence I would have liked in an exhibition, and that she's had in her previous shows, or the consistency of images...*'⁸¹³ Of the many explanations for Godwin's failure to produce a coherent theme, lack of familiarity with the city, over-ambition with the scale of her project, also with the dual learning curve of colour and genre, it may well be that her increased activity in the environmental sphere, recently through CPRE and simultaneously with the Ramblers, also proved yet another distraction.

The regenerative theme is recognisable at different levels in a cross section of the Bradford work. That is Godwin regularly interwove symbols of the city's industrial past, such as mill chimneys with contemporary elements in terms of people or objects. Although, Martin's latter comments can be appreciated where the loosely expressed theme often vied with other aspects of the image, such as Godwin's experimentation with colour, and political opinions on certain subjects, particularly where an environmental consideration was involved. With the title: '*Bradford a Surprising Place*', her aim appeared to interpret the slogan through different aspects of the old order, together with the history it signified being recycled, or re-programmed by new thinking, and showing how that could be interpreted by colour. A good example of this would be *Carwash at Thornbury* (1987) (fig 161). Here, she incorporated colour in both human and chromatic terms to show how facets of the city's contemporary society operated, and contrasted against the dull shade of its Victorian architectural backdrop.⁸¹⁴ The dominant red made a powerful statement for reading the modern components of the image, which as well as containing a compelling socio-cultural narrative, also demonstrated Godwin's compositional skills. That is the strong visual draw to the geometric shapes formed by the sharp angles, horizontal and vertical features provided within the frame. The blending of the two aspects were achieved by the positioning of one woman at the foot of the carwash, which ensured that the viewer would not lose sight of the wider cultural and aesthetic interpretations available within this image.

⁸¹³ S. Martin, '*Bradford A Surprising Place*', audio cassette recording, GFA

⁸¹⁴ See also my discussion of this image in, G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.52-3

Another image in which the colour red has been effectively exploited for its powerful visual impact was *Telephone kiosks for sale, Shipley* (1987) (fig 162). Godwin's subject matter was certainly more provocative in this instance, prompting weightier political and ethical questions about the sale of a public service. There is a slightly funereal feel to these rows of redundant K8 kiosks lying coffin-like (under the shadow of a functioning telegraph pole); the 'fallen red' symbolizing the end of Clement Attlee's post-war programme of nationalising industries (1945), and putting people before profits. The loss was reiterated in the crude '**FOR SALE**' sign daubed on the window, aptly sited just below the '**TELEPHONE**' sign, and the two different symbols of a cross – signifying 'death' and 'no'. Her humour came through with the inclusion of a redundant printed notice stating: '*phone home*', its cultural value would not have been lost on its original audience for which *E.T.* (1982) was still a fairly recent experience.⁸¹⁵ In some ways the image read like a mid-term judgement on the state of a nation as it gradually underwent privatisation or, in the view of some, as 'selling the family silver'. British Telecom (BT) was one of the first companies to be taken out of state ownership in November 1984, and the significance of this transaction, and its wider connotations caught the eye of Patrick Wright. In his article: '*On a ring and a prayer*', he produced a scathing argument exposing the dereliction of '*a vital public service*' by a more profit-focused organisation, furtively removing the loss-making booths whilst acting under the banner of re-organising the company.⁸¹⁶ Wright also noted BT's great fall from grace on the public stage, vilified from every direction: '*British Telecom was declaring huge profits by 1987, yet it was also coming under fire from all sides. In three short years, the flagship of privatization had been renamed the "most loathed institution in Britain."*'⁸¹⁷

The status of the iconic red box had long been recognised as a national symbol of public communication. Paul Graham had recently used it to reveal its wider manipulation by 'the people' as a communicator for 'the people'. In '*Graffiti on phone box, Belfast*' (1985), he produced an image of a K6 kiosk on an anonymous street that initially, might pass for anywhere in the United Kingdom, imbued with an

⁸¹⁵ *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, produced and directed by Steven Spielberg, released by Universal Pictures, 1982.

⁸¹⁶ P. Wright, '*How the Red Telephone Box became Part of Britain's National Heritage*', in Archive for Heritage and History, 05.08.88, p.6

<http://www.patrickwright.net/category/themes/heritage-and-history/page/2/>

⁸¹⁷ Ibid, p.3

air of sleepy suburbia with a cat strolling casually across the road on a summer's day, (fig 163). However, as with the rest of this series, there was a sinister undertone embedded in the seemingly innocuous scene, that is, the use of the phone box as a temporary and illegal billboard for sectarian propaganda rendered it active as another form of public exchange. Graham's practiced use of colour was subtler than Godwin's, belonging more to the 'banal' style, or 'grey area' alluded to by Tony Stokes earlier in this chapter. Graham picked up on other reds that feature in the frame such as the gate/base of wall, and the shop signage on the horizon point; it's symbolism able to point to the spilt blood, and all those caught up in the Province's violent civil war. As the fourth Bradford fellow (1989-90), Graham also used his experience not only to develop his visual ideas from the *Troubled Land* series into the new series: *Umbra Res*, but to revise his whole approach to photography from 'the old consciousness' (documentary) to new 'perceptions of reality' (lateral thinking).⁸¹⁸ Thus it is worth emphasising the experimental experience of the Fellowship, as an opportunity for photographers being able to address changes within their practice without the pressure of commercial considerations.⁸¹⁹

One question raised by Godwin's *Telephone kiosks for sale, Shipley* (1987), is can there be a positive regeneration theme, with all the evidence pointing towards a more politically cynical reading of the image? On a social documentary level, the most obvious interpretation would be the recycling element of the phone boxes. However, this too was double-edged, as Wright indicated in his essay, there was both a demand and a lament for their 'passing' that seemed to circulate the globe. Whilst many were 'auctioned' and redeployed as 'cocktail and shower cabinets', other sections of a wider British community wanted to retain them for their original function, as a sort of umbilical cord to the motherland.⁸²⁰ That is, Wright's article noted with great irony that on the back of another of Thatcher's questionable political activities, one K2 kiosk was shipped to The Falklands 'for members of the armed forces to use for

⁸¹⁸ P. Bonaventura, 'Paul Graham: The Troubles', *Circa Contemporary Art in Ireland*, 2004? (np) http://www.recirca.com/cgi-bin/mysql/show_item.cgi?post_id=1738&type=articles

⁸¹⁹ Graham subsequently commented on this period as being about the challenge towards greater creative expression, and the need to redefine and ultimately reject the traditional approach: 'We need people who will bend the medium to their aims, to use it, force it into uncharted territory, yet remain committed to it for itself'.

⁸²⁰ P. Wright, 'How the Red Telephone Box became Part of Britain's National Heritage', p.5

*phoning home.*⁸²¹ One answer lies within Godwin's technique, her use of light, colour, and composition, all conspire to lift the mood of the image above its political 'stickiness', and imply another way of 'seeing' it. Given her earlier comments on John Davies 'Sheffield' work (which might also apply to Paul Grahams' image) her use of light and shadows imply some sparks of positivity and mediation in the image. For example, whilst the combination of strident reds and blues make for a forceful statement on a politically sensitive issue, the pink of the factory wall defuses the severity of it. The enigmatic decorative features on the factory roof provide a visual distraction along with the summer greenery. And the reflective device – a subject I will shortly return to, draws down the colour of the sky and the brightness of the day, creating further diversions within the image.

In another time/place linked example, Tony Harrison's poem 'V' (1985) might also be understood as a 'pulse' for the changing landscape of the country, and 'the North' in particular. It was inspired by personal experience, and as with aspects of Wright's article, it dealt with the dissolving social structure in the post-war period, accelerated by the politics of Thatcherism with its stress upon individualism, as opposed to the collective. Harrison's deeply emotional response to the vandalism visited upon his parents' grave in his hometown of Leeds, began by dredging the depths of modern anti-social behaviour before turning the tables on the rest of society, including himself, whilst searching for reasons why and how this event might have occurred.⁸²² And yet, similar to Godwin's image it also contained a redemptive schema revealing his Marxist roots, for example Bernard Levin described the poem as '*...a meticulously controlled yell of rage and hope combined, a poisoned dart aimed with deadly precision at the waste of human potential.*'⁸²³ Therefore, amongst the long passages of profanity, horror and loss, Harrison threaded lines of children playing football interlaced with another game – a faux spring wedding, inspired by the Hawthorn petals falling like confetti as their ball regularly hit the blossoming tree. His motif – the Hawthorn tree, has a long association with spring in English poetry, which

⁸²¹ Ibid, pp.7-8

⁸²² D. Kennedy, '*Past never Found*' – *Class, Dissent, and the Contexts of Tony Harrison's V*, English Oxford Journals, 58 (221): 162-181, doi:10.1093/english/efp003 first published online:15.05.09 <http://english.oxfordjournals.org/content/58/221/162.full>

⁸²³ A. Clavane, '*Tony Harrison's poem V is a timeless portrayal of working-class aspiration*' *Guardian*, 16.02.13, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2013/feb/18/tony-harrisons-poem-v-working-class>

introduced a vestige of possibility for younger generations before succumbing to ‘the sins of their fathers’ – represented by the figure of the skinhead fan/Harrison.

In ‘*Pembroke Street, West Bowling*’ (1987), Godwin also used the metaphor of spring to represent aspects of ‘the North’ in recovery, (fig 164). The image is both portrait and landscape, it has a snapshot appearance, and yet the carefully posed youngsters – mid-way between the old back-to-backs and the new social housing – can be seen as part of the newly ordered urbanscape. Through a newspaper review it is revealed that the broad avenue of blooming cherry blossom trees were set into a newly paved and pedestrianised residential area of the city. Godwin praised Bradford Council’s efforts towards environmental improvements in ‘*down at heel neighbourhoods*’ to a local London journalist, adding it had achieved virtually the opposite to Camden (her home council).⁸²⁴ In this aptly springtime setting, these children have to be seen as the beneficiaries of the current regeneration scheme of urban reform. Not only are they intended to symbolise a better, brighter present, and future, but they also act as a reminder of the lost generations that preceded them. These would include the less healthy examples depicted earlier in McCullin’s Bradford image, or Graham Smith’s groupings in *South Shields* (1976) and *King Edward Bridge, Newcastle*, (1977), described by David Mellor as the recipients of a ‘*disinherited future*’, and many more going all the way back to the making of Bradford’s past wealth, which is also referenced by the dimly seen chimney effectively sited almost at the vanishing point of the picture (figs 165,166).⁸²⁵

In ‘*Horse and Foal*’ (1988), Godwin presented other elements of social improvement, including issues of animal welfare. Here a number of comparisons can be made with Martine Franck’s image: ‘*Newcastle upon Tyne*’ (1978), part of her Northern survey as a commission for the Side Gallery, (figs 167,168). On a simplistic level, both images present two themes in one frame, firstly, that of the pastoral with horse(s) grazing in the foreground, and secondly, the domain of the labouring class by showing modest suburban housing, and industrial architecture respectively, in the background. On a figurative level the separation has been imposed by the fenced borderlands, and on a symbolic level the sense of some progress, or that better times

⁸²⁴ L. Sagues, ‘*Brightened Bradford*’ *Ham and High*, p.112, ‘Newspaper Reviews’ file, FGA, BL

⁸²⁵ D. Mellor, *No Such Thing As Society*, p.109

are implied through the depictions of relaxed and healthy looking ponies. These stockily-built workhorses also have long connections with industrial and agricultural labour, but here thoughts of that have been suspended by the almost ambrosial setting in which they have been preserved; the sunlight has caught their bodies and they are surrounded by meadow flowers. In Godwin's work, the faltering gait of the young foal signifies the regenerative cycle, and by implication carried good prospects for Bradford.

Godwin's contact sheets of the Bradford 'street photography' showed that she experimented widely with a range of recognisable photographic devices used by other photographers. For example, she took a variety of shop window displays to act as theatrical backdrops for 'real life' reflected from the street, or showing the interaction of passers-by, (fig 169). This motif instantly recalled the manner of Eugene Atget's late career images, which resonated the great changes modernity brought to the old streets of Paris, or Garry Winogrand's diaries of New York, showing intriguing facets of its 'melting pot' inhabitants, through the fleeting reflections of a city in flux, (figs 170,171). However, her printer in Bradford: Charlie Meecham recalled: *'I probably did show her examples of work being made by other photographers at the time which might have broadened her view.'*⁸²⁶ Therefore it would also be more relevant to look at some contemporary examples such as that of Jem Southam who might have influenced, or caught Godwin's eye in the way that she claimed Parr's colour work had, for the national topics upon which they touched during the 1980s.

Katy McCleod's discussion of Southam's *'Paintings from the West of Cornwall'* series (1984/5), provided another example of current debates and events from within, and external to the photographic community being woven into particular images, (fig 172).⁸²⁷ His image of *'Mark's Bakery Camborne'* (1984) presented an interesting parallel of another post-industrial centre that saw its fortunes wane with the decline of productivity in the twentieth century. Famed for its tin and copper mines, the remaining engine house buildings were recast as Romantic ruins for the tourist industry's representation of Cornish culture, as referred to in the early part of the previous chapter with Godwin's image: *'Warning, Newlyn, West Cornwall'* (fig

⁸²⁶ C. Meecham, Interview with author, 17.09.05

⁸²⁷ Katy McCleod, *'Jem Southam – Images of Cornwall'*, *Creative Camera*, December 1985, p.21

83).⁸²⁸ Thus the window display of ‘instant Cornwall’ with its broad cache of regional ephemera (ranging from the more obscure Cornish tartan to the ubiquitous pastie) presented ‘*Cornish culture in a microcosm.*’⁸²⁹ Southam combined colour, and the reflection motif to create a provocative contrast between the often garishly painted and idealised memorabilia created for the holiday trade, with the considerably duller, but more authentic reflection of a row of terraced houses under an overcast sky. McCleod noted how the technique created visual puzzles by animating the display birds with their real counterparts, ‘*blurring the distinction between what’s real and what’s not*’, which also posed the wider question about the reliability of regional representation through imagery.⁸³⁰ She also concluded that Southam’s approach raised important questions about the making, placing and purchasing of ‘*various aesthetic manifestations of our culture*’, and how photography sat at the heart of contemporary debates about art and tourism.⁸³¹ This example shows firstly, that issues regarding heritage and identity were strong currency in Britain during this period. Secondly, topical issues would have presented a more compelling and flexible model for Godwin to have absorbed, build-on, as well as build-into her new project in Bradford than the older traditions, which marked her out as a contemporary operator wanting to expand her practice in colour.

In the shop windows of ‘*Children’s Clothes, Bombay Stores*’ (1987) and ‘*Women’s Clothes, Bombay Stores*’ (1987), Godwin fused the inanimate world of shop dummies with the busy streets of Bradford (figs 173, 174). Colour was clearly the initial focus with the bright array of garments and adornments, yet it was also double-edged, by this I mean it enabled references to be made to the expanding Asian presence within Bradford. In a decade shaped by social deprivation aggravating racial, religious and cultural tensions across Britain, it would be virtually impossible not to have considered these aspects when viewing the two images. Bradford had already been nationally spotlighted during the drawn-out and divisive events of the ‘*Honeyford*

⁸²⁸ See Amy Hale’s article, in which she discussed the increased ‘localised’ challenges to the touristic representations of Cornwall’s culture and heritage from the mid-80s particularly those presented by centralised agencies such as The National Trust. A. Hale, ‘**Representing the Cornish: Contesting heritage interpretation in Cornwall**’, *Tourist Studies* November, 2001, Vol.1, No.2, 185-196 <http://tou.sagepub.com/content/1/2/185>

⁸²⁹ K. McCleod, ‘*Jem Southam – Images of Cornwall*’, p.21

⁸³⁰ Ibid, p.21

⁸³¹ Ibid, p.22

Affair' (1984-5), and it later witnessed local race-riots in neighbouring Chapeltown, Leeds during late June '87, furthermore it was heading towards further intense media focus from the fall-out of the Salman Rushdie's publication, '*Satanic Verses*' (Dec'87), which prompted a public burning of the book in the city the following month.⁸³² Therefore it is reasonable to suggest that the reflecting device may also have alluded to the intangible 'wall of difference' that often separated, and divided certain sections of the incoming Asian community from its more established racial mix of residents. This explanation has certainly been picked up in more recent times, such as James Procter's observation (made earlier) regarding the representation of Bradford and its official 'white-washing' of the city during its regeneration programme, which effectively ignored the reality of its multicultural population and how that diversity should be actively acknowledged.

However, Godwin's images, as has been established, were operating on many levels, particularly inline with her regenerative theme and the experiment with colour. In a sense, a more celebratory notion of 'otherness' was implied through her vibrancy and sheer joy of presenting a mixture of strong colours together in a less political, and more creative context. Indeed she spoke of the '*ecstasy*' her Polaroid work (taken periodically throughout the 80s) had inspired when she fused strong colours in the close-ups of flowers from her garden.⁸³³ In '*Children's Clothes, Bombay Stores*', the richness of materials and their intricate decorative schemes on display point to celebration and ritual in another culture, and Godwin described these shop windows as '*absolutely amazing...due to the enormous Asian population...food, clothes and lovely shops for saris...*' (fig 168).⁸³⁴ This image also drew on notions of the family with the mannequins organised into a domestic group in a protective arrangement. In '*Women's Clothes, Bombay Stores*', there is perhaps something of a conciliatory or balancing role intended by the black and white costumes on the models, also the positioning of the glittering 'welcome mats' – part of the Asian culture, that suggested an open hospitality was extended to all. It promoted local enterprise, which included some of the initiatives that sprang up within the Asian community to cater for its own

⁸³² See D. Murphy's *Tales from Two Cities* for her detailed account of the 'Honeyford Affair', pp103-42

⁸³³ See also my discussion in: G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.33-4

⁸³⁴ F. Godwin, '*Bradford A Surprising Place*', audio cassette recording, GFA

people before, and after it had been affected by the large-scale unemployment following the collapse of the textile mills.⁸³⁵

As with '*Mark's Bakery*', there is also abundant evidence of the provisional, and homemade about both of the '*Bombay Stores*' window displays, which open them to some ironic playfulness on Godwin's part. In '*Children's Clothes*', dresses in protective cellophane are hung clumsily amongst other domestic items, as if in a busy market stall rather than a shop. And in the '*Women's Clothes*', the variously spelt versions of '*welcome*' together with the heart-shaped, and oddly spliced salutation: '*Happy Birt-hday*' emphasise the hand of an enthusiast rather than the professional. The obvious 'foreign-makings' lent them equal measures of humour, charm and grammatical 'elasticity', unlike the more judgemental responses often applied to native affectations or inaccuracies.

Indeed, Godwin's '*Parasol, Sunway House*' (1987), can be seen to draw more sharply on the mileage-for-humour approach in high street window dressing (fig 175). That is, it contained echoes of the parody employed in the highly popular BBC television programme: '*Are You Being Served?*' (1972-85).⁸³⁶ In which the main target was the splintering grip of the British class system with its cast regularly involved in an unseemly hierarchical scramble 'upwards' towards sophistication and style, often at the expense of their fellow workers.⁸³⁷ *Sunway House* in Bradford (a centrally located, former flagship *Co-operative* department store in the mid-30s) had clearly seen better times.⁸³⁸ The fashion scheme presented in this image was equally as inexpert as the *Bombay Stores*, but in a more tragic-comical way – it showed signs of fatigue rather than overzealousness. Its rather droopy 'summer-time' theme depicting an overdressed, over-accessorised mannequin supporting a winsome expression, and an oversized parasol; the latter housed a pink cockatoo, which

⁸³⁵ The issues of the Muslim community's piecemeal integration in Bradford was touched upon by the photographer, Michael Sedgewick in his '*And the North*' project, *Creative Camera*, January '84, pp1232-3

The Bombay Stores was founded by Abdul Kader, 1967, see Julia Pascal and Alison Benjamin's article: '*Clothes models*', *Guardian*, 30.10.02,

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2002/oct/30/guardiansocietysupplement1>

⁸³⁶ British Comedy Guide: http://www.comedy.co.uk/guide/tv/are_you_being_served/

⁸³⁷ Ibid

⁸³⁸ *British Listed Buildings: 'Sunwin House Department Store, Sunwin House, Bradford'*

<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-494519-sunwin-house-department-store-sunwin-hou>

instantly connotes kitsch. As if to add some much needed colour to the drab, washed out shades, or as a counterbalance to the exotic bird, Godwin included a slither of signage with its bright primary colour scheme making a nod to commercial posters found in France, also home of haute couture and high street chic.⁸³⁹ It is unknown if the contrasts I have outlined were ever attributed to these images, but it is certain that they were meant to be taken as a sequence, as that was how Godwin exhibited them in the Bradford show (1988) and subsequently in the *Landmarks* retrospective show and catalogue (2001). Additionally, there is little scope for establishing a regenerative theme in here, as its subject matter appeared to rest predominantly on its comparative role for the *Bombay Stores* images.

Signage

Another popular device that Godwin made great use of in this project was signage in all its public manifestations, which as Graham Clark noted in his discussion about documentary photography, '[was used]...endlessly as part of a political register'.⁸⁴⁰ One obvious contemporary example being Paul Reas' work on the new retail outlets of the 1980s in '*I Can Help*' (1988), and described by William Bishop as '...processing plants which transform living people...into measurable units of consumption'.⁸⁴¹ This interpretation was already familiar to Godwin through Nick Hedges' Camden exhibition images (organised by herself and Gerry Badger for *Co-optic* in 1975), and had been described by Neil Gulliver as '*a supermarket series showing zombie consumers in action*'.⁸⁴² Her readiness to exploit the punning value of signs for their comical or satirical value can be seen in some of her other works particularly the street surrealism theme in *Bison at Chalk Farm* (1982). This was a small compilation from her self-named '*humorous images*' file, and as was noted at the beginning of this chapter, it was possibly intended to reveal a lighter side to her photography, in contrast to the established serious vein in which most of her earlier work had been made. And as the discussions on *Our Forbidden Land* (1990) showed, visual punning was also used to its maximum effect with the various 'keep out' signs. '*Don't forget your dog, Rawson's Market*' (1987), also demonstrated the versatile relationship that Godwin maintained throughout her career with her different images

⁸³⁹ R. Bell, interview with author, 17.02.13

⁸⁴⁰ G. Clarke *The Photographer*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p.149

⁸⁴¹ W. Bishop, '*I Can Help*', '*Review*', *Creative Camera*, Aug/Oct 1988, p.66

⁸⁴² N. Gulliver '*Reviews*', *CNL*, [undated] Summer 1975, p.2

of sheep, whether as the sacrificial lamb (*'Near Mankinholes'*), metaphors for human transgressions (*'Brassington, Derbyshire'*), or in this case signifiers for the welfare of the land, (figs 49,81,176). Here, the black humour included the sheep, like a trio of market traders calling out their wares, and drawing attention to the sign above their severed heads.

The picture shared a similar degree of bathos with Eli Lotar's *Abattoir* (1929), in which his portrayal of cow hocks lined up and 'awaiting' collection seemed to retain something of their original purpose (fig 177). Yet as Kimberley Williams has shown, the more serious nature of Lotar's image revealed the 'brute reality' of modern Western life, where the simultaneous demand for, and denial of slaughterhouse processes were pushed to the poorer edges of Paris, where the refining processes of *'Haussmannisation'* kept them *'out of sight, out of mind.'*⁸⁴³ Thus Godwin's image also posed deeper ethical questions regarding the growing culture of consumerism in Britain, and its insidious affects on the food chain as factory farming increased. As previously established, the quality of foodstuffs had preoccupied Godwin for many years, more perceptively following her recovery from cancer in 1976. It was also touched on through the environmental concerns that inhabit parts of *Remains of Elmet* (1979). In particular, the pairing of *'Near Alcomden'* and *'Auction'*, where her graveyard-like image of the remnants of a farm allowed one to speculate on the wider and grimmer implications of the degraded scene described by Hughes, and his reference to the *'Shitty bony cattle disconsolate'*, appropriately preceded by his poem: *'The Sluttiest Sheep in England'* with its opening observations on the loss of good husbandry.⁸⁴⁴ Godwin's outright condemnation of modern farming methods and the different systems that support it were a major part of her discussion in *Our Forbidden Land*, which opened with her comments on the BSE outbreak *'recognised and defined in the United Kingdom in November 1986.'*⁸⁴⁵

Another contemporary comparison with Godwin's Bradford images worth considering is Peter Fraser's *'Flower Bridge'* series (1982). As David Chandler's

⁸⁴³ K. Williams, *Views Aboard, Views Abroad*, MA Dissertation, June 2012, p.18, <http://agluttonmusing.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/lotar-final-email.pdf>

⁸⁴⁴ T Hughes, *Remains of Elmet*, p.107 and 104

⁸⁴⁵ *'Archive: Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs'*, <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/bse/>

work has shown, Fraser's exhibition had been reviewed 'positively' by the '*North West Arts Photography Advisory Panel*', which included Sandra Martin, '*...and its success encouraged the additional public support for his work...*'⁸⁴⁶ Fraser, (like Southam and Graham) had been drawn to the work of the *New Topographics* photographers. The latter's subtly nuanced observations of the contemporary American landscape were calculated to show it in the process of being engulfed by the materials of commerce and consumerism. Its characteristic 'distancing' effected a sense of post-modern cynicism or helplessness; this approach was in contrast to the redemptive opportunities cited in Godwin's or Tony Harrison's work (above). Chandler has stated that the colour work of Stephen Shore was a particular focus for Fraser because of its added dimension of reality – a world instantly recognised, Shore in turn referenced Walker Evan's survey of American towns as an inspiration, for the way in which they were depicted in the vernacular style.⁸⁴⁷ Godwin had long quoted Evans as one of her photographic heroes, and strongly identified with his desire to combine a documentary practice with an artistic approach.⁸⁴⁸ So in this instance there is a selection of possible influences tempered by Godwin's own preference for interpreting the graphic geometry of the manmade landscape along with its wider socio-political and cultural detail.

Compositionally, Godwin's urbanscapes in '*Salvation Army citadel, Shipley*' (1987), '*Halifax*' (1986) and '*Barkerend*' (1987), echoed a number of features found in Fraser's representations of Manchester (figs 178, 179, 180). For example, both represented busy cities virtually devoid of people, and in which colour often played a subtle role. The strongest elements were the overlapping planes and angular shots of buildings dissected by their access routes, thereby acknowledging the photographers' personal journeys around the urban arteries, which suggested a familiarity, and therefore imposed a stronger sense of purpose on the scenes, (figs 181,182,183).⁸⁴⁹ Mundane architectural features, or street furniture were regularly accented for their individual aesthetic value, or visual whimsicality. In Fraser's case, they were often given precedence over the traditional sightline of the tourist's eye, for example the

⁸⁴⁶ D. Chandler, *Peter Fraser*, p.24

⁸⁴⁷ D. Chandler, *Peter Fraser*, p.23

⁸⁴⁸ R. Haas, '*Fay Godwin*', p.19 Godwin listed '*Paul Strand, Bill Brandt, Walker Evans, Wynn Bullock as well as John Blakemore*', 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

⁸⁴⁹ D. Chandler, *Peter Fraser*, pp.22-4

image of a bent lamp post trumps the church tower, of which only the tip is left visible (fig 181). In another, the uninterrupted rural vista was subjugated to the sharp angled shape created by a telegraph pole, with its wire slicing through the work to create an inner frame for the hand painted sign for '*potatoes*', and marking perhaps the city's limits (fig 183). In combination with the understated colours, Fraser's approach imposed a strong sense of democratic value of form and content in his perceptions of the streets of Manchester – of their somehow being reclaimed by this non-descript paraphernalia, a metaphor maybe for the disintegrating class system, and the levelling status of the citizens whose forbearers' hard labour had built the city.

However, the additional detail in Godwin's images also made them appear more complex. Again she layered her visual geometry with the readymade dark or discreet humour found in juxtaposed signs and posters. Perhaps, as with Walker Evans's signage, the intention was that they were to be appreciated for their documentary accuracy (by recording events of an historical time and place), as much as the ironic humour or conflicting meanings also included. Thus in the first image (fig 178) the buildings are cast in an austere format, partly through the almost monochromatic setting of pale sky and dull coloured brickwork, and partly by the somewhat intimidating architectural language of buildings and railings. The brief snatches of colour just about manage to trigger the 'joke' in finding two refuges for the dispossessed in such close proximity. On the other hand, the brightness of the colour could also be seen as representing the early signs of economical recovery as unemployment figures had begun to fall earlier that year as a result of tax cuts, underpinned by the growing success of enterprise zones.

In the second image colours are also muted, or played down through the emphasis given to the other strong elements in the frame, (fig 179). Here the zigzag of the fire escape added a dynamic to the surrounding squares and oblongs that dominated the picture. And yet, at the same time this scheme had to contend with her other focal point, which was the signage, and the AIDs slogan that came to haunt the British public via different mediums over the next twelve months. As Godwin's image showed, the messages made them irresistible for their contrasted content: one warning of life cut short - painfully, the other offering a comfortable extension to it. Their juxtaposition would hardly have been a coincidence, and probably represented a

shrewd tactic on the part of the government and advertising agencies, as a further incentive to halt the rising mortality rate of AIDs in Britain. As journalist, John Kelly has recently stated, the British government's advertising campaign (some five years after the AIDs epidemic had been established), had a lasting and global impact on Western nations for its stark simplicity, yet apocalyptic message: *'the television adverts...made the longest-lasting impression on the popular consciousness, instilling a sense of doom easily recalled by anyone over the age of 30.'*⁸⁵⁰

In the last image, the weather conditions at '**Barkerend**' together with the selected architectural features enabled an almost overwhelmingly three-dimensional impression of the scene (fig 180). In a very balanced and considered composition, Godwin used the bend of the road to compliment the sweeping curves created by the snow on the roof to add to her intriguing use of perspectives. Again the image was weighted towards monochrome, with the main splash of colour drawing one's eye to the two posters in which one suspects an environmental point was also being made by her, couched in the regeneration theme of two local/Yorkshire companies. Reading left to right, the first exhorted the public to fly to Hong Kong using Manchester International Airport, whilst the second, raised a the provocative question by Jet Petroleum asking *'who do you think pays for the petrol giants freebies?'* As this thesis has pointed out, the cost of oil as a pollutant had been the target for different environmental responses from the early '60s which ranged from spectacular national events surrounding the Torrey Canyon, to W.G. Hoskin's lone and embittered attack on, *'...the obscene shape of the atom-bomber, laying a trail like a filthy slug upon Constable's and Gainsborough's sky.'*⁸⁵¹ Furthermore, it remained a focus for Godwin in its use for fuel in terms of increased road schemes and volume of traffic, as was noted in the last chapter, thus her sensitivity to environmental concerns during this period would surely have found a grim irony in this unlikely billboard union.

A more direct link to Godwin's environmental concerns could be found in her images of different allotment sites around Bradford. This reference recalls the discussions between her and Mike Harper at Paul Hill's Photographers' Place – touched on at the

⁸⁵⁰ J. Kelly, *'HIV/Aids: Why were the campaigns successful in the West?'*, *BBC News Magazine*, 28.11.11, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-15886670>

⁸⁵¹ W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape*, p.232

beginning of this chapter as places of fascination and inspiration. Yet Godwin's interest had also developed from her local search for organic food supplies.⁸⁵² Her discovery of the 'Pioneer Nursery', East Sussex in 1984, initiated a photographic study that was to last for two decades. Its co-owner, Hattie Cole recalled, '*Fay was interested in the beauty she found in the chaos of the nursery*', provided a theme that she later translated into '*Allotments and mill Shipley Fields*' (1987), (fig 184).⁸⁵³ Here, the photo-printer, Robin Bell commented: '*It's the only completely overgrown patch in the picture of a manicured landscape, yet it's set aside for controlled gardening, and typically it's in a complete state of dishevelment.*'⁸⁵⁴ Cole and Bell's observations go straight to the heart of allotment culture and tradition as sites of social subversion. As the work of David Crouch and Colin Ward has shown, their nineteenth century origins, as provisions for self-improvement and self-sustenance for the working class, were bound up with previous centuries' struggles for access to the land such as 'The Diggers' activities of 1649.⁸⁵⁵ Some modern aspects of its rebellious history have survived in many owners' resistance to conform to normal conventions, particularly in the 'make do and mend' nature of their plots. For example, their sheds were described by architect, Ray Garner as a remnant of '*the self-builder's art...this separation from a mechanical system and rules, together with a need to innovate, is the force which clears the way for creativity and subconscious expression.*'⁸⁵⁶ Thus Godwin's celebration of the allotment's environmental and historical values was expressed through an oasis of anarchic, rich dark green growth together with a range of recycled windows and doors. Here she imposed a different emphasis on the regenerative theme in her project, for in the midst of civic order, and under the shadow of organised industry, her expression of green values appeared to 'cock a snook' over the paler, more sterile arrangements of its neighbours.

The image: '*Boys in the River Salt's Mill*' (1987) related more obviously to the leisure theme, and more subtly to an environmental element present in some of Godwin's Bradford series, (fig 185). In the first case, it showed the river Aire as a site of chilly recreation in which the boys are portrayed braving the icy, cold water out of season.

⁸⁵² C. Mapleston, Interview with author, 07.11.05

⁸⁵³ H. Cole, Interview with author, 18.03.13

⁸⁵⁴ R. Bell, Interview with author, 17.02.13

⁸⁵⁵ D. Crouch and C. Ward, *The Allotment, its landscape and culture*, Five Leaves Publication, 2007, p.18 and p.39

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid, authors quoting from Ray Garner, p.11

It also contained a regenerative element, as the river's former usage was part of the original transport system for the mill (1853), shown here as a redundant building, yet on the verge of refurbishment by local entrepreneur, David Silver, as both a retail centre, and gallery for David Hockney's paintings. In the second case, the image might also be read as a chilling scene, as she would have been aware that the Aire had been heavily polluted from the Industrial Revolution onwards, rendering it 'a dead river' by 1970.⁸⁵⁷ Indeed in *Our Forbidden Land* Godwin quoted it to be '*one of the most polluted [rivers] in Britain*', supported by one of Ted Hughes poems detailing the circle of Man's environmental destruction: '*If the sky is infected /The river has to drink it/If earth has a disease that could be fatal/The river has to drink it/If you have infected the sky and the earth/Caught its disease off you – you are the virus*'⁸⁵⁸

Seen through its second lens the image also retained a link with the theme of pre-eco consciousness, or nature/lyricism discussed in previous chapters, regarding the maternal influences on Godwin, as well as the values she admired via Edward Carpenter's legacy to Bedales. In both cases, social reform was tied into a form of bodily management that proposed an innocent relationship with nature and a form of spartan endurance that has been detected in Godwin's own ascetic life choices, particularly regarding her diet. Her image of the boys dressed in bathing trunks suggested it was not the first time they had plunged in the river for their own pleasure, or perhaps the entertainment of others, whether as a demonstration of fortitude and friendship, or an act of adolescent bravado or machismo. The scene becomes reminiscent of late nineteenth century British painters such as Henry Scott Tuke, one of the founders of the Newlyn school, Cornwall. His paintings such as '*August Blue*' (1893) or '*Ruby, Gold and Malachite*' (1902) celebrated idealised versions of the young male body, generally the sons of the local fishing community, here painted at leisure by, or in the water (figs 186, 187). Tuke was inspired not only by the naturalist conventions of the '*en plein air*' approach advocating the virtues of a life lived close to nature, but also by the boys indifference to their nudity, and often on the threshold of adulthood, which also implied a veiled eroticism in his work. Aspects of these two readings are evident in Godwin's composition, particularly with the lean

⁸⁵⁷ '*Historical Background*', *Aire Rivers Trust*: <http://aireriverstrust.org/about/history-of-the-river/>

⁸⁵⁸ F. Godwin, *Our Forbidden Land*, p.110

Also T. Hughes, 'What the Serpent Said to Adam', *Our Forbidden Land*, p.110

and healthy physique of the figure in the foreground – clearly the most robust and adventurous member of the group, which adds an unexpected element of poignancy to her work. As the mother of two sons approaching the end of their teens, she would have appreciated the brevity of this phase of relative innocence and derring-do available to young males, before becoming contaminated by the adult world. From this limited selection of Godwin's Bradford work, it has been possible to demonstrate how her images, with their wider potential for a multi-referenced reading, might easily have overloaded, or blurred the aims of the project, and prompted Sandra Martin to comment on its '*lack of coherence*.' In terms of other critics, it has already been noted, that the exhibition received a very limited response. This was also reflected in her archive with its comprehensive record of critical reviews of her books and exhibitions, yet contained only three articles in the Bradford file.⁸⁵⁹ Furthermore, all available evidence has shown that plans to tour the exhibition were subsequently abandoned, which also suggests that the necessary support/interest was not forthcoming.⁸⁶⁰ Lastly, in 2004 Godwin's recollections of her reaction – at the time, still expressed some of the shock and frustration she had felt about her work effectively being ignored; it not only revealed self-perceptions about her overall status within the photographic community, but it also pointed to the rigidity maintained between the photographic boundaries she had attempted to cross, she stated:

*I'd been spoilt with a lot of interest in my work...**Land** had happened and...it never occurred to me that they wouldn't be interested in the colour...I realised that I might fall flat on my face and do bad colour work, but if it was good I expected the same amount of interest...and I actually think that the Bradford documentary did have good points about it...in the end there was nothing to show for this exhibition, because none of the other arts bodies picked it up, and there was a slightly muted response from the critics...*⁸⁶¹

In recent times, Jem Southam went some way to acknowledging Godwin's point by stating:

⁸⁵⁹ Peter Cattrell, Godwin's assistant throughout the '80s, recalled her dedicated efforts to publicise each project with the local and national press. P. Cattrell, Interview with the author, 24.11.10

⁸⁶⁰ NMM poster for Godwin's exhibition '*Bradford in Colour*' stated it was a touring exhibition, however Colin Harding's opinion is that it did not take place, C Harding, email to author, 15.02.13

⁸⁶¹ F. Godwin, Interview with author, 27.07.04. Also see my discussion of this subject in G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.23-9

*Fay's work had perhaps a troubled relationship at times with the growing wave of slightly younger practitioners. The Ridgeway was a key publication for me in the 1970's but I know of few others who I worked alongside in the 1980's who would have acknowledged her influence...where we spent a great deal of time looking across the Atlantic and became fixed on the man altered landscapes of New Topographics, Fay's work drew on more English traditions.*⁸⁶²

Two other viewpoints acknowledged both Godwin's status at the time, and that of the wider system in which she was operating, firstly Roger Taylor recollected:

*I do think there was an element of taking a risk, artistically...and emotionally being out in Bradford doing those things. Because it was a Fellowship, and even though we tried to make it as easy as we could, still she must have felt that there was a set of demands on her to produce and to come up with the goods and create an exhibition etc.*⁸⁶³

Secondly, Keith Wilson's unfavourable review of the exhibition, showed how great the risk had been, and how the responsibility for it lay primarily with Godwin, he noted: '*Colour and black and white have few similarities. There are no links between the two, only parallels. But by shooting a colour exhibition for the first time Godwin has set herself up for comparisons with the practised excellence of her black and white landscape.*'⁸⁶⁴ Therefore the evidence would seem to suggest that from a professional perspective Bradford had not been an entirely positive experience for Godwin, and from a critical viewpoint the exhibition could clearly be considered a failure. Furthermore, it must have revealed to her – at the height of her popular success, just how difficult it would be to move on from the black and white landscape genre.⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁶² J. Southam, in correspondence with the author, 29.04.13

⁸⁶³ R. Taylor, interview with the author, 16.05.05

⁸⁶⁴ K. Wilson, '*Is Fay Colourfast?*' *Amateur Photographer*, 12.03.88, 'Newspaper Reviews' file, FGA, BL

⁸⁶⁵ In my previous paper I considered some of the other reasons why Godwin's Bradford work was not perceived to be a critical success. This included: her lack of formal experience in the medium and subject matter; personal anxieties regarding her fieldwork in an unknown city; and no accompanying publication through which to relay her experience, or to underpin/clarify her aims in the project. See G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.50, 53, 56

On the other hand, the Fellowship had not been approached as an imminent change of direction in her photographic practice, rather as a purposeful pause. During the same period she was committed to the environmental work, and a two-book contract: *Our Forbidden Land* (1990) and *Edge of the Land* (1994). Furthermore, after the Fellowship programme, there is no evidence to suggest that she had ever intended to pursue the same type of documentary colour work, in the way that the ‘new British colour’ photographers were applying it to their own practices, rather, it accentuated the experimental factor of the project, a ‘testing of the waters’. Therefore, I would like to return to Roger Taylor’s reference that Bradford represented a pivotal moment, by exploring some of the new developments that emerged from Godwin’s experiments with colour.

Experiments in colour and scale

Godwin’s various uses of the reflective device in the Bradford work, with its scope for creative play, had a strong connection to her later colour close-up series (figs 157 and 168). In the first image, pools of colour, shadowy shapes and vegetation seem to decorate the empty boxes offering new possibilities as they languish in a state of adjournment. Whereas the second image reversed reality and ‘brought Bradford into Asia’ adding to the rich mix of colour already on offer. One of the more obvious links to the later work was ‘*Broken Windows, Salts Mill*’ (1987) (fig 188). Here, the window frames provided a grid work in which they revealed a series of abstract shapes, textures and colours from the world outside, like a curio box with both fixed and ephemeral knick knacks, prefiguring some of the images that were to emerge in *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1998), (figs 189,190). As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Godwin’s fascination with the various properties of glass and the general paraphernalia of a smallholding had begun in earnest in 1984 with the Pioneer Nursery photographs, (figs 149,191,192). These black and white images had formed part of her personal work, before she discovered their new potential in colour with a macro lens, where she discovered the compressed botanical studies that survived amongst the discarded outhouses creating worlds within worlds.⁸⁶⁶ Following her work in Bradford, Charlie Meecham noted: ‘*The garden/close-up work was more abstract, so this did allow her to think more about print quality for instance with*

⁸⁶⁶ F. Godwin, *Glassworks and Secret Lives* 1998, Stella Press, p.53. She related these versions of events at her many workshops, slide lectures and interviews

*regard to colour saturation and texture, and I think some of her glasshouse work was particularly successful in this respect.*⁸⁶⁷

The reasons for developing the close-up work were manifold and gradual, prompted by events from the late '80s to the early '90s.⁸⁶⁸ On a personal level, her nursery work provided respite from the physically and emotionally depleting task of researching *Our Forbidden Land* during the latter years of the '80s. In a draft copy for an unpublished photographic autobiography, Godwin posed a rhetorical question that clearly pointed to its welcome screening facilities: *'Was peering through the algae encrusted glass the foil I needed after the all too clear scrutiny of the state of the countryside?'* (fig 190).⁸⁶⁹ In 1993, she required further surgery on her knee, which curtailed her landscape practice because of the physical strength it required, and in the same year a serious family crisis redirected her energies on every level.⁸⁷⁰ Also, in the mid-90s a permanent move to her weekend cottage along the rural East Sussex coastline signified a critical detachment from inner London life. However, it also enabled Godwin to integrate more fully with the expanding artists' community, from Rye in the East through to Hastings in the West, and develop her new work in a more conducive atmosphere. From a professional perspective, she had to negotiate the exponential growth of technology at the turn of the '90s. This further progressed the assimilation of artists using photography and photographers pursuing a fine art status, and created a multi-media profile for the visual arts that appealed to younger students unencumbered by the politics of the previous two decades. As Julian Stallabrass recently observed:

*The status of photography in the museum has changed radically over the last twenty years. What had been a marginalized, minor and irregularly seen medium has become one of the major staples of museum display... The defence of photographic working in criticism and art history has acquired much of the portentousness and high seriousness that were once reserve for painting.*⁸⁷¹

⁸⁶⁷ Interview with Charlie Meecham, 17.09.05

⁸⁶⁸ G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.62-3

⁸⁶⁹ F. Godwin, *'Making Pictures'* mock-up of Godwin's idea for a 'photographic autobiography', 1994/5 (np)

⁸⁷⁰ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA, Part 11, Tape 6, Side A

⁸⁷¹ J. Stallabrass, *'Museum Photography & Museum Prose'*, *New Left Review* 65, September-October 2010

The challenges of change

Glassworks and Secret Lives was made up of nine different series from 1989-95, originating from six different sites around Britain, also work from her trips to Hawaii, New Zealand and Italy.⁸⁷² During this period it largely remained personal work, progressing gradually from the nursery '*Glassworks*' to include other perplexing profiles of materials *in situ* such as netting, cellophane or plants, therefore developing the notion of the '*Secret Lives*' beneath, (figs 193,194).⁸⁷³ However, Godwin was also sharing the images with her workshop students, and though she often spoke of their encouragement in terms of taking it forward as a new body of exhibition work, it also suggests she was nurturing an ambition for it as well. She was further persuaded by curator, Rosemary Williams to show the early series as a fundraiser at Richmond College in 1990, which was successfully received and prompted further exhibitions.⁸⁷⁴ Its first major showing was at the Mead Gallery, Warwick (1995) after which it was nationally toured. The curator, Sarah Shalgosky recalled: '*I enjoyed it for its abstract qualities and the way that she used photography to express ideas about colour and texture...I don't think these are Fay's most resolved works, rather I think they mark the first stage in a change of direction and I think that was the general response.*'⁸⁷⁵

In general, opinions about Godwin's development of the colour close-up images were deeply divided. For example, Peter Goldfield believed her reasons were predominantly led by the technological innovations, and recalled her keen interest in his computer led experiments at the annual Duckspool workshops from the mid-80s.⁸⁷⁶ He also included practical considerations that resulted from the London move, such as the loss of a '*state of the art*' darkroom, as well as her long-term assistants.⁸⁷⁷ Gallerist and agent, Zelda Cheatle was greatly disappointed by Godwin's introduction of the '*Glassworks and Secret Lives*' series to her professional portfolio. She believed it did not represent the established gallery/public persona image that Godwin

⁸⁷² F. Godwin, *Glassworks and Secret Lives*, p.54

⁸⁷³ G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.59-60

⁸⁷⁴ R. Williams, Interview with author, 15.09.04. '*Glassworks*', 07.11-.01.12.90, Williams went on to run two other exhibition of the evolving series in film and digital at the Penny School Gallery, Kingston, '*Alchemy*', 2000 and '*Synergies*', 2004, respectively, partly '*to demonstrate both her change and continuity.*'

⁸⁷⁵ S. Shalgosky, in correspondence with the author, 29.07.05

⁸⁷⁶ P. Goldfield, Interview with author, 23.08.05

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid

had spent years cultivating with the public, critics and collectors, and declined to keep the images in the gallery collection of her work: *'All the things I admired about Fay were in her black and whites – very dramatic and distant...battling with the elements...whereas the colour work did not inspire the same response, it's as if they weren't taken by the same gutsy, independent woman.'*⁸⁷⁸ Cheadle's reaction to Godwin's new work centred on gender stereotypes implied by its subject matter, *'...it's as if women never had another life, the whole thing of working with flowers and colours, it's all getting a bit too sentimental and feminine...'*⁸⁷⁹ For her, the intimacy and precision of the close-ups were 'epitomised' by the '**Valentine**' (1991) image, which she not only disliked, but was also uncomfortable with the idea that Godwin had produced it, *'I perceived her as being a much greater photographer than that...The black and white photographs were more enduring...the colour work was like greeting cards, to be put in the bin at the end of the week, (fig 193).'*⁸⁸⁰

Ironically, it would seem the new work represented a personal sense of loss and betrayal for both women, but for entirely different reasons. As already noted, the period during which the colour close-ups were produced had been emotionally and physically turbulent for Godwin. If some of that disruption had been filtered into her work, one very persuasive example would be her use of the '**Valentine**' image – together with seven of her monochromes, for an analysis of Edna St Vincent Millay's poem: *'What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why (Sonnet XLIII)'*, 1923 as part of an arts educational programme televised in 1994.⁸⁸¹ The poem, a personal choice, portrayed an older woman looking back on her life and former loves, and Godwin's interpretation of it expressed a range of emotions: *'...regret...a certain amount of pain...[and]...tenderness.'*⁸⁸² Its selection by Godwin gave it an autobiographical charge, emphasised through her '*personal response*' in a discussion of the monochrome images as metaphors.⁸⁸³ Here, she described how '**Copper beech, Stourhead**' (1983) had been selected for its portrayal of '*weeping branches*' and

⁸⁷⁸ Z. Cheadle, Interview with author, 25.07.06. It should also be noted that Cheadle was instrumental in helping Godwin publish *Glassworks and Secret Lives* (1998), partly because she believed the images had more resonance in that form, rather than on the gallery wall.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸⁸¹ F. Godwin, *The English File: The Picture in the Poem*, BBC2 in association with the Arts Council, 16.02.94, video cassette recording, GFA

⁸⁸² Ibid

⁸⁸³ Ibid

'reflections' and 'for looking at things through a screen...into memory', which had resonance with her (earlier) suggestion that the colour close-ups represented a foil.⁸⁸⁴ Interestingly, '*Valentine*' was introduced as an alternative reading, as a single metaphor for the poem. Here, the predominant reds, heart motifs and flowers behind a watery, misted screen symbolised the intimate and sensory subject matter of the poem: '*...but the rain/Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh/Upon the glass...*'⁸⁸⁵ The reflective theme, combined with the hazy painterly effect of the image betrayed the softer, less durable imagery that had obviously disturbed Cheatle, and was given an added poignancy as Godwin revealed the flowers had been a personal gift.

The smaller scale of the colour work also encouraged a more introspective reading, which persuaded other observers that Godwin's focus was closing in on the ageing process. For example, Ian Jeffrey commented on this aspect as not untypical in the works of older photographers such as Bill Brandt and Shomei Tomatsu, and he noted how their later work drew them to subjects of organic disintegration, as outward signs of their own physical decline, in particular the dulling of sensory perceptions.⁸⁸⁶ Furthermore he equated the use of colour by older photographers with passivity, in terms of '*being unable to affect reality*', unlike the greater abstracting and tonal possibilities offered by black and white.⁸⁸⁷ At different times, Jeffrey described how Godwin's close-ups reminded him '*of medical imaging*' in particular the red veined membrane of the '*Ruby Chard*' (1993-4) images: '*...like slides of preserved specimens in a laboratory of the seasons. Thus throughout there are suggestions of deformation and the forensic...*', all of which fitted with her declining mobility and a developing heart condition, (fig 194).⁸⁸⁸

Another useful example to consider here would be the painter Paul Nash, of whom it has been established intensified his use of colour as his health deteriorated. Andrew Causey observed: '*The later paintings...are the most positively painted, with less of the luminosity of watercolour which influenced the treatment of 'November Moon', more materiality in the paint, and what was for Nash an amazing boldness in colour*

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁸⁶ G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.63-5

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid, p.38

⁸⁸⁸ I Jeffery, *Glassworks and Secret Lives*, 1998, p.11, also see I Jeffery, '*Fay Godwin, Photographic chronicler of our changing Natural World*', *Guardian*, 31.05.05, p.23

contrasts', as might be seen in the contrast with '*Landscape of The Moon's Last Phase*' (1944), produced two years later, (figs 195, 118).⁸⁸⁹ The suggestion here is that Nash's decision to 'free' his hand on the palette, and canvas came as part of a liberating process from the usual approach to his work, instigated by squarely facing his own mortality, after which he gave himself permission to first let go in other ways. It is that latter notion – the release of his hand that is of particular interest here. Without wishing to detract from, or tread on the delicate circumstances of Nash's experience by drawing a comparison with amateur painting, it is, however interesting to consider the findings of the psychoanalyst and author, Marion Milner in her discussion of colour and control in her own work.⁸⁹⁰ Her book *On Not Being Able To Paint* (1987), which influenced Godwin's approach to painting in the '90s, described the powerful sense of emancipation that came with momentarily letting go of the manmade rules to slavishly copy borderlines and shades.⁸⁹¹ She believed that by using '*colour impressions*' (as developed in the mind), or allowing colours to merge created a completely different, and more satisfying scene '*this feeling of colour as something alive, not fixed and flat and bound...*'⁸⁹² Therefore, allowing for a contributory element from all the different observations made thus far, regarding Godwin's new focus on the colour close-ups, it is in this last direction – the compelling urge for creative and expressive liberation, that I would now like to proceed.

In 1993 Godwin spent a two-week residency at Shave International Artists' Workshop, Somerset, clarifying reasons why she felt the need to paint at this point in her photographic career.⁸⁹³ Here she met British painter, Oliver Bevan – a visiting tutor, and with whom she continued to take tutorials and workshops on an irregular basis until 2001 – referred to at the beginning of this chapter.⁸⁹⁴ Bevan believed the colour close-ups, with their abstract quality led her to the style of '*(spontaneous/gestural) action painting*' that she had produced at the Shave

⁸⁸⁹ A. Causey, *Paul Nash*, p.332

⁸⁹⁰ M. Milner, *On Not Being Able To Paint*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1987, pp.22-5
Also, Godwin quoted the influence of Milner's book whilst in conversation with Charles Mapleston on the subject of her paintings, 28.02.02, Roll no.28 in unedited DVD rushes

⁸⁹¹ Ibid, pp.23-24

⁸⁹² Ibid, p.24

⁸⁹³ F. Godwin, '*Shave* Shave International Artists' Workshop catalogue, 1993, (np), Fay Godwin Archive, BL. Godwin was also commissioned to produce the photographs for the catalogue.

⁸⁹⁴ O. Bevan, Interview with author, 21.11.05

workshop, believing, ‘*the two things fed each other*’.⁸⁹⁵ He also added ‘*It’s a nice way into painting – abstract – it doesn’t always matter how it turns out because the activity itself drives you on; it’s quite liberating.*’⁸⁹⁶ Bevan’s comments comply with the experimental phase that Godwin was undergoing with her photography at this time, and when she was also struggling to sever some of the controlling impulses she had developed through the past two decades in her monochrome works. During an interview with Edward Bowman in 1993, she described her dilemma in intellectual and emotional terms that reflected Milner’s theory:

*I feel that with my colour flower pictures, I am beginning to enter another area which is slightly different. I want to expand that area, because I feel that somewhere along the line there is something that constrains me to take a picture in a particular way and I would like to free myself from that. This is all part of getting at that unconscious area. I mean, I touch on it at times, but not as far as making the composition. I get it in content but I would like to free up more, and I feel that there are ways of doing it.*⁸⁹⁷

However, part of the constraints from which Godwin was struggling to free herself also came from an external source. That is the established ‘rules’ regarding the boundaries between photography and painting, in which colour abstracts in the former had always been considered mimetic of the latter. In 1976, John Szarkowski described images that looked like ‘*Synthetic Cubist or Abstract Expressionist paintings*’ as a failure of colour photography, further noting: ‘*It is their unhappy fate to remind us of something similar but better.*’⁸⁹⁸ Also in Sally Eauclaire’s books: ***The New Colour Photography*** and ***New Color New Work***, which proved so influential for Graham, Fraser and Southam, she systematically set about distancing the work of her selected practitioners from that of modern painting. In both publications she emphasised photography’s fundamental connection with the real world, in which equal attention was given to all the components of the scene: ‘*...lines, shapes, colors,*

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid

⁸⁹⁶ O. Bevan, Interview with author, 21.11.05

⁸⁹⁷ F. Godwin, ‘*Meanings Behind Landscape and Elsewhere*’ by Edward Bowman *The Photographic Journal*, September 1992, p.348

⁸⁹⁸ J. Szarkowski, ‘*Introduction*’, *William Eggleston's Guide*, The Museum of Modern Art, 1976, p.9

*and textures upon the picture surface.*⁸⁹⁹ Although many of these views had been revised by the 1990s with photography moving to the centre of contemporary art practices, for those who came up through the combat zone of the previous decades, such attitudes endured and would have proven another obstacle in Godwin's creative progress. Her strict adherence to the rules of the craft were traceable via a determination to keep her images grounded in reality, that is, not constructed by her, together with her insistence on being called a photographer rather than an artist, both were potent residual elements of photography's long battle to be recognised as an art form in its own right.⁹⁰⁰ An example of her creative impasse came during Godwin's discussion with Val Williams in 1993, when she spoke about the problems she was facing with the production of the last of the 'Land' trilogy: *Edge of the Land* (1995). The book's format and documentary content was not dissimilar to *Our Forbidden Land*, in terms of her also producing the text, which often defaulted to an environmental investigation, she stated:

*...it felt like a death sentence, and put a real block on me. I wanted to work creatively...as a nice sequel to Land, but couldn't change it...The big irony was that the last picture in it is very abstract, and was put in as a defiance – but my editor loved it! I then realised I could probably have done the whole book like that, (fig 15).*⁹⁰¹

Godwin's attraction to the abstract image had a long history. Illustrator and childhood friend, Zelide Cowan recalled Godwin's early interest in abstract painting, '*...her art work at Chelsea was quite abstract...Fay was never figurative.*'⁹⁰² She also spoke of those influences reasserting themselves in the colour close-ups: *it seemed as if she was trying to break through the limits of the technology of the camera...these things that were broken, fragmented and that disappeared and so forth, were a symbol of that process of trying to get through.*⁹⁰³ As with Bevan's observations, Cowan's suggestion was that the colour work was helping to release some of the

⁸⁹⁹ S. Eauclaire, *The New Color Photography*, Abbeville Press/Cross River Press Ltd, 1981, pp.13-15, and S. Eauclaire, *New Color, New Work*, Abbeville Press/Cross River Press Ltd, 1984, pp.10-11

⁹⁰⁰ G. Alexander, *Crossing the Landscape*, pp.59 and 70-1

⁹⁰¹ F. Godwin, Interview with Val Williams, BLSA, Part 4, Tape Two Side B

⁹⁰² Z. Cowan, Interview with author, 09.11.06. Godwin attended evening and some day courses at Chelsea Art College on a drop-in basis during the first half of the '50s

⁹⁰³ Ibid, 09.11.06

latent creative expression through by returning to some of the less self-regulated approaches that preceded her photography.

As the child of a trained painter, Godwin grew up appreciating it to be a serious subject with a commercial value as well as a recreational one. She recalled always having been surrounded by her mother's etchings and paintings – often depicting landscapes and the architectural features, of the different countries in which they lived, and she acknowledged their influence on her own compositional skills from a very early age.⁹⁰⁴ As previously noted in Chapter Two, childhood friends recalled her determination to make painting part of her future, and as the following extract from a school essay entitled: '*Colour*' reveals (written just before her fifteenth birthday), she had an educated awareness of the artist's palette:

*There is a beautiful soft tinge in the sky...If I were painting it, I should use a water colour of deep prussian blue mixed in with black and possibly a little ultra marine...As for the trees on these bright mornings...there is a profusion of rich green, not bright but rather a blue green quality, in graded shades...Never for two seconds at a time can I see the same shade in the same place.*⁹⁰⁵

However, as with the example of James Ravillious, Godwin remained ambivalent about her own abilities to follow the footsteps of an accomplished parent, preferring to channel her artistic sensibilities into a different creative medium.⁹⁰⁶ When asked by the film-maker, Charles Mapleston if she saw any cross-fertilisation between her painting and later photography, Godwin responded that she saw her painting as a continuation of it, although was very reticent about showing her work, preferring it to remain a hobby.⁹⁰⁷

Thus it would seem that the trigger provided by the NMM Fellowship had enabled her to revise her personal and professional situation in the period immediately after the immense success of *Land* (1985). As Zelda Cheatle observed: '*Bradford was a*

⁹⁰⁴ F. Godwin in Interview with author, 20.07.04

⁹⁰⁵ F. Godwin, '*Colour*' School Essay, 14.02.46, GFA

⁹⁰⁶ F. Godwin, Interview with author, 20.07.04

⁹⁰⁷ F. Godwin in conversation with Charles Mapleston, 28.02.02, Roll no.28, unedited rushes for DVD: '*Don't Fence Me In: Fay Godwin's Photographic Journey*', Charles Mapleston /Malachite Film Co

*seminal point for Fay, she turned round lots of things...I don't think she ever had that time before to really think about her practice.*⁹⁰⁸ Therefore the return to painting in '93 feasibly signified part of Godwin's personal odyssey to regenerate aspects of her photography, a 'return to base' in order to re-emerge with more confidence regarding the direction of her colour close-ups and later work in collage. Oliver Bevan's responses to her action paintings at the Shave workshop was that she used the process as a form of self-education and/or healing treatment, which has echoes of the discussion from Chapter One, with Hughes and the curative properties of creative work following her illness.⁹⁰⁹ Bevan further noted: *When I saw what she'd done at Shave [Fay] I could relate it to the ideas of people like Mark Tobey, Jackson Pollock or William Baziotès*, all Abstract Expressionists, who had a formative effect on his own work over the years, prior to his experiments with colour photography during the late '70s.⁹¹⁰ From his own wide experiences of working through a creative journey in both painting and photography, Bevan suggested that Godwin should also combine both interests by painting over some of her old black and white prints:

*The method was to use egg tempera...then scrape away or re-dissolve the paint so that some bits of the photographs revealed themselves like little windows in otherwise painted rectangles revealing little lines of cows, or a tree...This ran and ran, and she really enjoyed it. She'd already got a basis to work from, and then she could add another element to it...and make a kind of hybrid thing. I would have liked to have organised a show of them, but she never felt that they'd got far enough...*⁹¹¹

Godwin's reluctance to take her painting further represented a strong contrast with the confidence readily shown with her early **Glasswork** series, previously discussed. Although, it also complies with other subjects raised during the course of this study, such as her sensitivity to criticism, which included the mute response to the Bradford exhibition. However, the author of this thesis was present at the selection/organisation of works from Godwin's studio to the British Library, and it was the author's opinion,

⁹⁰⁸ Z. Cheatle, Interview with author, 25.07.06

⁹⁰⁹ O. Bevan, Interview with author, 21.11.05

⁹¹⁰ Ibid, also A. Le Mée, *'From Abstraction to Figuration - Introductory article to retrospective exhibition catalogue "Un parcours atypique"*, Oliver Bevan, (np)

<http://www.oliverbevan.com/texts/texts-en/annick-retro.html>

⁹¹¹ O. Bevan, Interview with author, 21.11.05

at that point, that the paintings had a significant relationship to the photographs and therefore needed to be kept alongside.

It could be said that the combination of her career as a visual artist came with her paintings over photographs, which finally brought colour to a full blossoming but as a manual, manipulated form, rather than a photographic one (figs 196-207). In these images her hand was present for the first time, as a direct expression of her passion for colour, creating a vividness, a drama, and a definition that wasn't always there in her photography. Aspects of the light, form, and texture from her monochromes were revealed to create the impression of a luminous translucence coming through, as with light through glass. A comparison might easily be made with Kandinsky's brief return to folk art with his experiments of painting on glass: '*Hinterglasmalerei*' (figs 208, 209).⁹¹² Here the final effect was the production of an almost phosphorescent quality in the painted colours. Coincidentally, Kandinsky had also described the work as a relaxing activity with a more serious intention, that is, in common with other experimental work it was intended to free his mind from thinking a certain way, in order to move forward with his serious work.⁹¹³ He noted, '*That is how works of art originate, and that is also how things originate which are not yet works of art, but only stations on the way to works of art...*'⁹¹⁴ Therefore Godwin's return to old territory to find a new means of expression in her photographic work produced a freedom and spectrum of shades that brought about new meanings to the base black and white prints. The final irony was that in fact her monochrome prints enabled a breakthrough with her colour work and liberated the artist's hand.

⁹¹² My thanks to David Mellor for this useful reference

⁹¹³ V. Kandinsky, in Hans Konrad Röthel, *Vasily Kandinsky: Painting on Glass, (Hinterglasmalerei)*, anniversary exhibition, The Solomon R Guggenheim Foundation, 1966, p.8 Digitized in the Internet Archive, 2011

<http://www.guggenheim.org/new-ork/exhibitions/publications/books/items/view/138>

⁹¹⁴ Ibid

Conclusion

The thesis has revealed that far from being unpopulated Fay Godwin's pictures have been widely inhabited, providing a rich insight into the life of this photographer-author, environmental campaigner, and ultimately artist. Through a series of inter-dependent stages she forged a dedicated, and determined approach to succeed in the landscape genre, before applying her status and expertise to take an increasingly penetrative view on the welfare of the British countryside. Finally, fortified by her recent experiences she rechanneled her resources into pursuing a more fulfilling creative vision, even when it led her away from the populist position she had worked so hard to achieve; thus she remained a campaigner of sorts.

In chapter one the discussion mainly revolved around the figure of Ted Hughes and the central role he played in establishing Godwin's status as a fine art photographer. Significantly, his suggestion that she might provide his '*visual trigger*' in the Calder Valley project, initiated his becoming a trigger for her own creative ambitions as a photographer-author, and showed him to be as effective in his absence, as he was in his active role of collaborative author. My work examined a wider contextual basis for their reciprocal working process and eventual friendship, by proposing empathic connections through shared biographical experiences and strong beliefs in green issues. These foundation blocks introduced two other influential figures in Godwin's development and progress as a photographer: her mother, Stella Simmonds, and her husband, Tony Godwin. The former's nurturing of Godwin's interests in the natural world with its restorative properties, and the discipline of the Protestant work ethic found persuasive parallels with Hughes' upbringing, together with the cultural impact of his marriage to Sylvia Plath. In terms of the latter, however, the long-term effects of her husband's abrupt departures from Godwin's life – twice, drew comparisons with Hughes' painful experience in the aftermath of Plath's demise.

I also interpreted Hughes' decision to return to the Calder Valley project in 1976 through two lenses. The first was partly premised on Godwin's sensitive reading of his childhood terrain in *Worlds* (1974), and the second was due in part to her recently enhanced standing as a photographer-author. Her remarkable rise during this decade showed the breadth of Godwin's drive to succeed through her long-term strategy of

preparing the ground for *Remains of Elmet* (1979). Here, she not only encouraged Hughes to work via a reciprocal process, but ultimately, she took a controlling hand in the arrangement of image and text showing her to be his equal in the project.

Additionally, the brief glimpse into her literary portrait practice revealed her to be an astute businesswoman in the highly stratified world of publishing, which traditionally viewed photographers as illustrators. Here my research indicated that Godwin quickly established herself as one of the first visual authors, working collaboratively with a living writer to be acknowledged by publishers in the category of British topography.

The thesis also showed how her own high standards, as well as those she set for others helped maintain Godwin's ambition. Particularly her focus on being identified with prominent British landscape photographers, as well as being influenced by their style and workmanship. My examples included: the sense of drama drawn from Bill Brandt's landscapes translated by her through the *Ridgeway* series and into the austerity of *Abel Cross* (1977). Another was the lead she took from Ray Moore's strongly contrasted prints to enhance the luminosity in her images, together with Paul Hill's observations concerning her development of Moore's abstracting technique in *The Drovers' Roads of Wales* series, later redefined in '*Scarista Beach*' (1982). Lastly, the meditative device in John Blakemore's early work, presented a compelling opportunity to consider Godwin's personal grief – following her *annus horribillus*, expressed in her image '*Blake Dean*' (1977).

Another point of discussion that arose from Godwin's dark and evocative style in *Remains of Elmet* was its precedence in the English tradition of the sublime. Here the ensuing discussion led to further speculation about her discomfort and displeasure of having her work categorised as romantic. Her development of a hybrid style, reflecting aspects from both documentary and landscape practices of the 1970s with their penchant for gloom and detachment, respectively, was shown to divide opinion, both then and now, on how her work might be interpreted. From my own perspective, Ian Jeffrey's suggestion that a composite approach, project by project, was shown to be the most useful advice, for this ongoing discussion about her style. It also emphasised Godwin's timely entry into the recently revitalised medium of creative photography, which enabled her to employ a wider body of knowledge and

experience at a point when publishing was the focus. Here it was demonstrated that her literary portrait practice, built on her powerful network skills, as well as the opportunities created by Tony Godwin, became a source of potential co-authors for new publications, with the successful examples of Ted Hughes, John Fowles and later Alan Sillitoe.

Finally, the profile of Co-optic revealed the energy and idealism of the early '70s in terms of community spirit, as well as the reintroduction of photography's creative potential. It also showed the ambition of its membership, fired up and financed by Stephen Weiss, along with a core body of support. This was demonstrated by its developing a voice alongside the Half Moon Gallery, yet it also served as a statistic of the high casualty count of organisations (and individuals) that did not survive an era in which photographers fighting for recognition as 'creative' image-makers, were also competing amongst themselves over limited opportunities and finances. This case study also revealed the challenging terrain encountered by Godwin as a relatively inexperienced photographer. Her anxiety about joining a group colonised mainly by ambitious young men, was shown in stark contrast to her confident approach when tackling the publishing industry. In addition, it also flagged issues around ageism and gender across the board in the '70s photographic community, two potent considerations that served as an early example of her unusual fit, as well as her tenacity to overcome the age issue by conscious avoidance of sexual politics. Godwin's experience in Co-optic was relatively brief, but significant and showed her taking the initiative as a natural organiser, and promoter of her own and other people's work, as well as enjoying the company of her younger colleagues by recreating the social gatherings/networking at her home. Finally, the inclusion of *Chrysanthemums* in the *Real Britain* postcards series presented an opportunity to show her ambition for her photography to develop its own unique 'voice', yet always tempered by the literary circles in which she operated.

In the second chapter, I showed how Godwin's turn to environmental campaigning had been a piecemeal process that was eventually rewarded with the presidency of the Ramblers (1987-90). Her progress was shaped by different people and events throughout her life, and activated by the wider cultural changes taking place in Britain and its inevitable impact on photography. The development of her politicised

campaigning persona began with her marriage to Tony Godwin, who sharpened and shaped her Left-leaning instincts, further enhanced by the active political milieu in which they lived and socialised. From this predisposition, I demonstrated how her style of campaigning – epitomised by her most vocal and visual expression of protest in *Our Forbidden Land* (1990) compared with a range of key figures from the British tradition of environmental movements, showing her to be part of a continuum and product of William Morris' vision for England. The principle examples included the ascetic values of Edward Carpenter and his relationship with the land as a provider of untainted nourishment and recreation, the moral and aesthetic outrage of Clough Williams-Ellis against institutional and commercial disfigurement of the British landscape, and her identification with E.F. Schumacher's philosophy of decentralisation, which reflected Godwin's established antipathy towards distant authority.

Moving into the post-war period, my discussion returned to the subject of romanticism. Here I noted its inherent weakness in environmental protest, whether through its perceived links with nineteenth century transcendentalism, apocalyptic predictions, or anti-modernist views. Seminal texts by Rachel Carson, E.F. Schumacher and W.G. Hoskins were each looked at for the way they represented man's relationship with nature and/or the past, which in the case of the first two authors enabled influential detractors to cast doubt on their work. Although Godwin's earlier work had been influenced by a not dissimilar mindset, I made a distinction between their attitudes and Godwin's, who was not a nostalgist, by proposing that her early appreciation for the negative connotations of romanticism for a serious body of work, however awkwardly expressed, was part of her survival strategy to deal with the changing parameters of the landscape genre within which she operated, and enabled her to develop work with a more socially critical edge.

As the green debates of the '70s exposed the flaw in landscape photographers' representations of Britain, Godwin was shown to become more discerning about her choice of authors. This was through her identification with Derek Cooper and Alan Sillitoe's unsentimental views of the land, as well as seeing it as a place to respect and interact with, not venerate or plunder. In addition, these two examples also revealed Godwin's insecurities as a freelance photographer-author, attempting to compete with

established writers in a business designed to protect their interests rather than hers. I also drew attention to her hyper-sensitivity regarding her work/her playing a subordinate role, whether real or imagined, to both men, which recalled similar anxieties with the Ted Hughes discussion in the previous chapter. Significantly, the discussion around *Our Forbidden Land* showed how her concerns did not disappear when she became the writer, and that she still strived to preserve the hierarchy of her visual contribution to the book.

Continuities and changes in Godwin's career were observed through the decline and fall of the landscape genre from the mid-70s to the mid-80s. The example of the V&A's exhibition: '*The Land*' (1975-6) which featured '*Ridgeway, Barbary Castle Clump*' (1974), showed how it was still acceptable to present the landscape as an aesthetic object, whereas two years later, the Arts Council's show: '*Perspectives on Landscapes*' (1978) revealed a more circumspect support. Ironically, Godwin's '*Roman Camp, Trawsfydd 2*' (1976), the only one of her images to show evidence of the man affected landscape, was used to denounce her subscription to the romantic style some five years later. Here, Paul Lewis' verbal assault on the practitioners and financial support for the Minor White influence (*TEN:8* 1983), provided an insight to the bitter divisions that defined the decade as new theories concerning the function of photography hacked down the old, and often naive values of the 1970s. At the same time, images from *The Saxon Shore Way* (1983) showed Godwin's desire to show a more neglected landscape couched within the less provocative covers of a walkers' guide. Significantly, she was able to re-use a number of these images, including '*Oare Creek*' (1983) and '*Reculver Abbey with Caravans*' (1981), over seven years later in *Our Forbidden Land*, where she was able to wag a less restrained environmental finger at the perpetrators.

I also touched on the radical revisions of John Blakemore and John Davies' photographic practices, as modes of representation in landscape. Their work in CPRE's exhibition '*Tomorrow*' (1986), and its subsequent publication *England's Glory* (1987) showed an overtly political content contrary to the commission's brief – to show the beauty of the countryside. It presented a marked difference with Godwin's more characteristically lyrical, yet cryptic response, which made a striking contrast with the straight talk on her multiple TV appearances to promote the

exhibition, and also revealed her reluctance to radically alter her working practices at this time. It was not until she became President of the Ramblers and began her research for *Our Forbidden Land* that Godwin felt compelled to ‘take off the gloves’ with her environmental message. Peter Cattrell’s testimony regarding the effect of Godwin’s findings were extremely insightful, not only did they reveal the level of her commitment to the ‘rights to public access’ cause, but they also revealed the deep level of self-control exhibited in her images which in his words: ‘*did not reflect the anger and misery they were clearly stirring up in her.*’⁹¹⁵

Lastly, in chapter three the thesis moved into another phase of Godwin’s career with her investigation of colour. Here, Bradford was shown to epitomise her successful rise through photography in a variety of ways. Firstly, the creation of the NMM signified photography’s hard won achievements since the 1970s, and this had obvious parallels with her career. Secondly, her depictions of ‘the grim North’ in *Remains of Elmet*, a decade before, proclaimed her arrival as a new force in the black and white landscape genre, thus by returning to celebrate the successes of Bradford’s regeneration in colour, she was also announcing her own regenerative process as a photographer/artist. Lastly, I proposed that Godwin’s support for, and identification with the self-help ethic (enterprise zones) as part of Bradford’s regeneration scheme was reflected in a range of her images, including: ‘*Carwash at Thornbury*’, (1988) ‘*Pembroke Street, West Bowling*’ (1988), ‘*Children’s/Women’s Clothes Bombay Stores*’, (1988) and ‘*Allotments and Mill, Shipley Fields*’ (1988).

The influence of the ‘new British colour’ photographers introduced at the beginning of the chapter was looked at in more depth as a closer analysis was made of Godwin’s images. Here, I suggested that in ‘*Children’s/Women’s Clothes Bombay Stores*’, although she was using the traditional language of street photography, parallels could be drawn with Jem Southam’s work in ‘*Paintings from the West of Cornwall*’ series (1984/5). Not only in his use of the reflective device in ‘*Mark’s Bakery*’ but also as an exercise in documenting another British post-industrial region recast as a tourist destination that had capitalised on the remains of its past. In her urban scenes ‘*Salvation Army citadel, Shipley*’ (1987), ‘*Halifax*’ (1986) and ‘*Barkerend*’ (1987),

⁹¹⁵ P. Cattrell, Interview with author, 24.11.10

I also drew comparisons with some of the subtle colour and leaner features of Peter Fraser's '*Flower Bridge*' series (1982), where the complex angles and curves of the city's infrastructure was premised on his own influence at the time, Stephen Shore. Here I argued that Godwin's additional inclusion of signage prompted multiple readings, often vying with the colour for supremacy with their provocative political messages.

Additionally, I emphasised the environmental concerns that often emerged in Godwin's Bradford images, more obviously in '*Allotments and mill Shipley Fields*' (1987), yet also discernible in '*Boys in the River Salt's Mill*' (1987). Here, I linked these references to her recent involvement with CPRE, and her current term of office as President of the Ramblers Association. Godwin's focus on a number of different allotment sites showed them to be a preoccupation at the time, reflecting the ongoing work on her '*Glassworks*' series as well as potential research/material for her book, '*Our Forbidden Land*'. This rich mix of interests in her work called attention to the increasing number of opportunities offered to her in the wake of her success with '*Land*', and the different directions in which she was moving at this time, here I proposed that these other diversions may have accounted in part, for the lack of coherence in her Bradford work.

The overall value of this chapter was the opportunity it presented to show the creative force driving Godwin's photography. Thus, whereas the previous two chapters dealt with her dual imperatives to build and maintain her status as a fine art photographer, the discussion about the origins of the '*Glassworks*' series (1984) revealed how, at the high point of her popular and critical success in landscape, she was restless to find a new direction for her creativity. As an artist on a progressive journey, it was noted that Godwin's experiments with colour were in progress from the turn of the decade, both with the polaroids and her observations of other photographers working in colour. Also, her prompt defence of Martin Parr's colour work in '*Last Resort*' (1986) suggested, amongst other things, that she supported the right to artistic freedom.

On the other hand, this study also showed how difficult Godwin found the process of change, both in the poor reception of her Bradford work, as well as the real and perceived opposition to the colour close-ups that followed. In the first instance, this

was shown to be a serious misjudgement on her own part regarding the strength of her status outside the confines of her monochrome landscape work. Yet it was also partly connected to prevailing attitudes surrounding new British colour at that time, which was generally assumed to belong to the younger photographers' repertoire. In the second instance, a range of examples provided different responses to the colour close-ups, which generally recognised them to be a contraction of her creative expression, exacerbated by physical deterioration and her move from London. Zelda Cheatle's outright rejection of the work was based on commercial considerations, but more emphatically on grounds of personal taste and disappointment. Furthermore, her recollections were that Godwin's colour close-ups did have a small but growing audience, although her ambition for them to be automatically accepted on the same terms as the earlier work had, in Cheatle's opinion, always been unrealistic. Ian Jeffrey's comments were premised on the introspective journey that accompanies the ageing process, and preoccupations with the disintegrating body. Here I proposed there to be an element of truth in all of these perspectives, however I also pursued Godwin's own concerns: that after two decades of working in a different scale, media and overall focus, she was also forced to deal with her own resistance to change.

I suggested that despite the critical failure of Bradford, it too had represented another trigger in Godwin's photographic journey. Fortified by her recent campaigning experience, she refused to submit to her critics and returned to painting in order to pursue her true potential in colour. Two of the most significant aspects of the painting workshops were its link with her beliefs in self-healing through the creative process which on this occasion was her creative block. And secondly, it brought her into contact with Oliver Bevan whose timely suggestions regarding her painting over old prints were to produce some of her most expressive work in colour since the polaroids. Therefore whilst this phase marked the decline of her popular and critical success as a productive landscape photographer, it also signalled the beginning of a more creative, expressive and fulfilling period in her art.

The last consideration is where scholarly attention of Godwin's career might be moved forward from this study? Having presented this contextualised profile of her career what remains is a more detailed study, which is not within the scope of this

work, to be made around her relations with writers and poets, or the environmental movement or perhaps with colour photography. Everything may have to be recast when a thorough evaluation is made of the paintings, and the light they cast upon Fay Godwin's photography.

Appendix: A Brief Chronology of Fay Godwin

The chronology in this thesis represents a brief insight to Godwin's life up to the point that she became a professional photographer in 1970, and is intended to compliment other biographical information that appears throughout the main body of the text. It is drawn from the author's extensive research on Godwin's biography, via unpublished family letters and papers, together with extracts from interviews with family, friends and former colleagues. Additionally, it benefits from a recently released interview with Godwin, conducted by Val Williams for the British Library's '*Oral History of British Photography*'. The main purpose of this abbreviated chronology is to introduce some of the salient factors that helped shape her development as a professional photographer.

A Disrupted childhood

Godwin was born in Berlin, on 17th February 1931 to Sidney Simmonds (1899-1978), a British Consular, and his American wife, Stella, (1896-1948).⁹¹⁶ Sidney's work for the Foreign Office meant that the family moved home and country approximately every two years; their various postings included Moscow, Tehran, Moscow, Athens, Cairo, Durban and Rome, with intermittent periods spent in England and elsewhere. It seems fair to suggest that Godwin's young life was affected by routinely being uprooted from home and friends, as well as the cultural and geographical conditions of one country in order to adjust to those of another. Indeed, she often commented on the difficulty she felt about frequently being the new girl at school, and having to adapt to the new circumstances in which she found herself.⁹¹⁷ One of the more dramatic interruptions to family life was during the early stages of the Second World War when the German invaded Greece, (6.04.41). The Simmonds family were amongst the many foreign residents forced to flee Athens with minimal preparation and often without contact from London. Their escape route (eventually to South Africa) involved a series of life-threatening incidents overland and on water, where

⁹¹⁶ Godwin's sole sibling, Donald, was born 22.03.33 (died Aug 2010)

⁹¹⁷ F. Godwin, interview with Val Williams for the '*The Oral History of British Photography*', BLSA, 1993, Tape no.1 Side A

they regularly came under enemy fire, and at one point were abandoned on Crete by a crew that mutinied, forcing them to re-route to Egypt for a brief period.⁹¹⁸

Some four months later, the family's arrival in Durban was further affected by Sidney's recall to war work, for which he was based in England. The letters show how this placed a strain on the marriage for a number of years, even after they were reunited towards the end of the war.⁹¹⁹ It was during this period that Stella announced in a letter to her American relatives that in future her daughter would be known by her official forename: Fay, instead of her middle name, Suzette – used since birth.⁹²⁰ Conversely, Sidney continued for a number of years to refer to her (and address letters) as 'Suzette', which hints at some parental manipulation of the children.⁹²¹ Despite evidence of a temperate climate in which outdoor activities were part of the family lifestyle, a number of additional factors appeared to have made the three year stay in South Africa a challenging and predominantly negative experience for Godwin, who recalled, '*[it] was very good for the physical pursuits, but bad for the family.*'⁹²² The main difficulties included: the hostile reception presented to British refugees by sections of the Boer communities, together with a permanent lack of affordable accommodation for the family, and lastly, Godwin's unhappy experiences of being sent to a boarding school for the first time. In later years she rarely referred to this period of her life, even amongst friends, a fellow refugee at the time and life-long friend, Zelide Cowan, spoke of Godwin's reluctance to discuss the matter as she saw it as '*...a weakness to trump it up, and to trot it out.*'⁹²³

On her paternal side, Godwin's father hailed from a traditional working class background in Nottingham, he rose through the scholarship system, and went on to study languages at Cambridge.⁹²⁴ The Protestant work ethic appears to have been shared by both parents, who also aspired to raise their social status to harmonise with

⁹¹⁸ Ibid, the event was also related in a series of letters from Stella Simmonds to her family in America in August 1941, GFA

⁹¹⁹ Sidney Simmonds letter to Laura (née MacLean – sister-in-law), 03.08.43, also in 1948 following Stella's death, (letter undated), GFA

⁹²⁰ Stella Simmonds letter to Laura (née MacLean - sister), 30.10.41, GFA

⁹²¹ Sidney Simmonds letter to Laura (née MacLean), 03.08.43, and a series of letters sent to Godwin between 1941-3, GFA

⁹²² F. Godwin, interview with Val Williams, BLSA, 1993 Tape no.1 Side A

⁹²³ Z. Cowan, Interview with author, 9.11.06.

⁹²⁴ D. Simmonds, Interview with author, 14.11.06, also J. Pinch, Interview with author, 15.11.07.

the privileged expatriate community in which they circulated. These aspirations had repercussions for the family during periods spent in Nottingham at the Simmonds family home; it was often described by Godwin as a '*miner's slum*', and her various accounts of spending school holidays there revealed the difficulties in vacillating between two distinct lifestyles.⁹²⁵

From the early days Godwin was given strong encouragement, particularly from her mother, to aim for university and a career that would utilise her linguistic skills, such as '*international work with the NUO (a UNESCO-styled organisation)*'.⁹²⁶ Stella's own career as a commercial artist for the Marshall Field & Company department store (Chicago) meant that she had enjoyed a financially independent lifestyle, which included lengthy trips to New Mexico, Europe and Morocco, before she settled into marriage, motherhood, and where her artistic endeavours were often put to a more domestic purpose.⁹²⁷ Family letters suggest that she anticipated a similarly autonomous process for her daughter. However Stella's premature death in 1948 had major consequences for Godwin's expectations of academia followed by a professional career. Later in 1948 the family was posted to Copenhagen, where as the sole female in the family, she was obliged, under the direction of her father, to take up the duties of her late mother as housekeeper and social events organiser; this requirement ceased when he re-married some three years later.⁹²⁸ Godwin did in fact begin a self-funded course in comparative French and Italian literature at Copenhagen University, however she did not complete it, and never returned to full-time education; this omission remained a source of resentment against her father for the rest of her life.⁹²⁹ In 1952 she moved out of her family home, and relocated to London.

⁹²⁵ F. Godwin, interview with Val Williams, BLSA, 1993, Tape no.1 Side A

⁹²⁶ Stella Simmonds letter to Harold MacLean – brother, March 1948. GFA

⁹²⁷ D. Simmonds, Interview with author, 04.03.10

⁹²⁸ Former Schoolfriends have all independently confirmed these events during interviews with the author, and had been confirmed by Godwin in a substantial number of interviews during her lifetime.

⁹²⁹ V. Beddows and R. Lloyd-Jones, Interview with author, 12.08.08, also C. Hacker, letter to author, 24.04.08, Godwin also relayed this episode, during her interview with Sue Lawley on '*Desert Island Discs*', *BBC Radio 4*, 17.3.02

Godwin's early expectation for a career in an international arena was known to old school-friends from her mid-teens.⁹³⁰ Drawing from memory, they have recently described life at that time being dominated by the effects of the Second World War on Britain. That is, as the offspring of the wealthier middle-classes they were brought together in a small, single-sex, English boarding school in Berkshire – many having been taught at home until this time.⁹³¹ Within this already stressful situation, Veronica Beddows and Rosalie Lloyd-Jones recollected the adolescent Godwin as experiencing a greater sense of displacement, noting that she *'had no stability, nowhere to call home, although one didn't often talk about home as it simply made one feel homesick.'*⁹³² In a brief summary of Godwin's personality at this time, they added impressions of her being *'more sophisticated and exotic than many of the other girls...she had an artistic temperament...and could be very volatile. It was very important to her to achieve...there were three or four students who generally vied to be 'top of the class' and she was one of them.'*⁹³³

Marriage and Family Life

In 1961, Fay married Tony Godwin (1920-76) they had two sons, Nicholas and Jeremy. It has regularly been noted that Tony's professional connections took Fay to the heart of the publishing world, which eventually created many opportunities for her future career as an author photographer. His prowess as a successful 'networker' has long been established; and he attracted an impressive list of national and international artists to his avant-garde bookshop, ***Betterbooks***, in the Charing Cross road from the '50s to the mid-'60s. Success made him a charismatic although equally capricious figure on the London literary scene, all of which proved a strong attraction to Fay who was just embarking on her own career in publishing by *'commissioning book covers and typography at John Murray.'*⁹³⁴ In fact, both brought assets to the marriage, aiding and complimenting the other's interests, for example, there is a suggestion that Fay's family/social connections with the outgoing editor at Penguin, Tom Maschler, provided the opportunity for Tony to be considered as the

⁹³⁰ V. Beddows and R. Lloyd-Jones, interview with author, 12.08.08, C. Hacker, letter to author, 24.04.08. Godwin remained in close contact with Beddows and Hacker until her early thirties.

⁹³¹ Luckley (Girls) School, Wokingham, Berkshire. Founded in 1918 by Elizabeth Drake <http://luckleyhouseschool.org/about-us/history/>

⁹³² V. Beddows and R. Lloyd-Jones, interview with author, 12.08.08

⁹³³ Ibid, 12.08.08

⁹³⁴ C. Hacker, in correspondence with the author, 13.05.08

replacement, rather than him standing on merit alone.⁹³⁵ In many ways, Fay's role in the marriage mirrored the traditional subordinate female position that she had occupied at the behest of her father in Copenhagen, that is, she became housekeeper and hostess whilst her husband went on to become a highly influential figure on the British publishing scene.⁹³⁶

In Margaret Drabble's recent *Guardian* review of Fay's career, she touched on the cross-class career limitations affecting women's opportunities during the early phase of second wave feminism in Britain.⁹³⁷ Commenting as an acquaintance of both the Godwins she noted, '*Domestic responsibilities and conflicts constrained her, as they did so many women of that period, and she appeared to adapt to her role.*'⁹³⁸ Drabble also proposed it was the break-up of the marriage that enabled Fay to really develop her photographic ambitions.⁹³⁹ Although there are historical truths in this account, it was also the edited highlights of a ten-year partnership that necessarily skimmed over the compatible features of a relationship (smaller details inevitably buried in the aftermath of a difficult break-up), in order to focus on the outcome of its ending. As well as a joint interest in literary matters, the Godwins were equally passionate about walking for pleasure, and shared a love of the Arts; they actively supported them whether at a local or international level.⁹⁴⁰ During the early '60s, Tony wrote to Fay whilst on a business trip (to Melbourne) describing his discovery and purchase of an early Fred Williams painting '*whom no-one [himself included] seems to have heard of.*'⁹⁴¹ His ensuing descriptions reveal an appreciation of the landscape genre, contemporary tastes in painting, as well as an awareness of the modern masters; he wrote of the picture being: '*a gorgeous near abstract landscape...of tree*

⁹³⁵ Author in discussion with Nick Godwin, 10.09.12, who stated that Donald Simmonds was a schoolfriend of Tom Maschler, and a very good friend of Fay's. Maschler recommended Tony to Allen Lane who subsequently appointed him as Maschler's replacement.

⁹³⁶ There are very few publications on Tony Godwin, one recent account can be obtained in Jeremy Lewis, '*The Rise and Fall of Tony Godwin*', Penguin Special *The Life and Times of Allen Lane*, Penguin/Viking, 2005, pp. 343-69

⁹³⁷ Margaret Drabble, '*Fay Godwin at the National Media Museum*', *Guardian*, 08.01.11, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2011/jan/08/margaret-drabble-faygodwin>

⁹³⁸ Ibid

⁹³⁹ Ibid

⁹⁴⁰ Tony Godwin's support for young graphic design artists became a part of his legacy at Penguin Publishing, in terms of the innovative book cover designs he introduced to replace the original colour-coded bands. A variety of sources attested to Tony's art collecting during interviews with the author including Anne Crosby (sister), 04.06.07, and Jill Norman, Publisher (27.01.09).

⁹⁴¹ Excerpt from an undated letter from Tony to Fay Godwin (probably early-mid-60s), GFA

*trunks...beautiful, wonderfully serene and harmonious, that same quality that links Chardin and Braque and Vermeer...*⁹⁴²

Both Dieter Pevsner and the Al Alvarez referred to Tony's 'discerning eye' for collecting art, and of his readiness to trade on its aesthetic, as well as its financial value. That is, the former spoke of Tony's collection having started in the early '40s with trips to Paris, and later being '*applied to...the corporate identity of his bookshop 'Betterbooks', its emblem being Matisse's Bird of Peace.*'⁹⁴³ And the latter, described Tony as a '*minor collector*' who always kept a ready '*portable...if the going got rough. In London it was a Benin bronze which he sold before he left, and in New York it was a stunning Renaissance statuette that he'd picked up for almost nothing in California.*'⁹⁴⁴ These brief examples of Tony's relationship with the contemporary art market imply that he had both an informed appreciation of art, as well as a strongly pragmatic approach to the ownership of it. Considering Fay's early education regarding its practical application (Stellas' home-making, and etchings of local landscapes often reproduced as Christmas cards), there clearly existed a mutually beneficial aspect to their joint knowledge and attitude. This manifested itself in Fay's photographic career with the unequivocally professional approach she adopted from the start, which was having a clear understanding of her value as both an artist and as a businesswoman. Paul Hill's observations on this subject were: '*She was always realistic with her worth...she knew rates for other groups in the arts [for talks, signings etc]. It gave her a different perspective than someone in photography...Fay was thinking in a slightly wider arena...*'⁹⁴⁵

In 1980, Al Alvarez's described Tony Godwin as '*a writer's publisher – most happy when dealing with text and creation*'.⁹⁴⁶ Coincidentally, Drabble echoed these words some thirty years later by referring to Fay Godwin as '*a writer's photographer*' who attracted literary figures to her photographs, and that many of her images had '*poetic reference*'.⁹⁴⁷ Drabble also described them as: '*...a memorable couple...charged with energy*', which undoubtedly fed the ambitions of both, but was only properly realised

⁹⁴² Ibid.

⁹⁴³ D. Pevsner, Interview with author, 19.11.08

⁹⁴⁴ A. Alvarez, '*Author's Editor*', *London Review of Books*, Vol.2, No.1, 24.01.80, pp.17-8

⁹⁴⁵ P. Hill, Interview with author, 1.10.05

⁹⁴⁶ A. Alvarez, '*Author's Editor*', *London Review of Books*, Vol.2, No.1, 24.01.80

⁹⁴⁷ M. Drabble, '*Fay Godwin at the National Media Museum*', *Guardian*, 08.01.11

in Tony.⁹⁴⁸ Thus it seems that a side effect of that dual force was its destructive nature when not applied to positive and satisfying activities, and it has been suggested that this negative vitality ultimately helped to burn out their compatibility by 1969 when the marriage finally failed, and Fay's professional photographic career was set in motion.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid

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